## ALTERNATE CINEMAS

Avoid the familiar—check out one of Seoul's alternative theaters

## IN THE SHADOW OF GANGNAM

Sitting in the shadow of Korea's wealthiest neighborhood seems to be one of the cruelest aspects of life in this panjachon — certainly one of the country's poorest

## GIRL SCOUTS KOREA

Helping girls improve their communities and become confident women of character

# GROOVE

KOREA

## YEOSU EXPO 2012

Yeosu plays host to the 53rd world exposition from May 12 to Aug. 12, marking what will be one of Korea's biggest international events of the year

## WINE & DINE

With a movie and a loveseat for a special occasion at Ciné de Chef

## BRAAI REPUBLIC

An Itaewon restaurant that showcases South African culture, from the rugby jerseys on display to the massive zebra pelt on the wall



# SUPERCOLORSUPER

## Trials & tribulations

In the land of the $150 concert, the conversation on affordable international acts begins and ends with SuperColorSuper. But despite SCS's popularity, international shows might grind to a halt—unless May is a massive success

## HBC Fest

Korea's biggest festival for expat musicians looks to avoid controversy this time around

## Operation Bikini

Give it up — accept that you will not lose those 10 kilograms, and get cooking

GK

Korea's No.1 Expat Magazine

PMC PRODUCTION

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# BY THE NUMBERS

*Yeosu Expo*

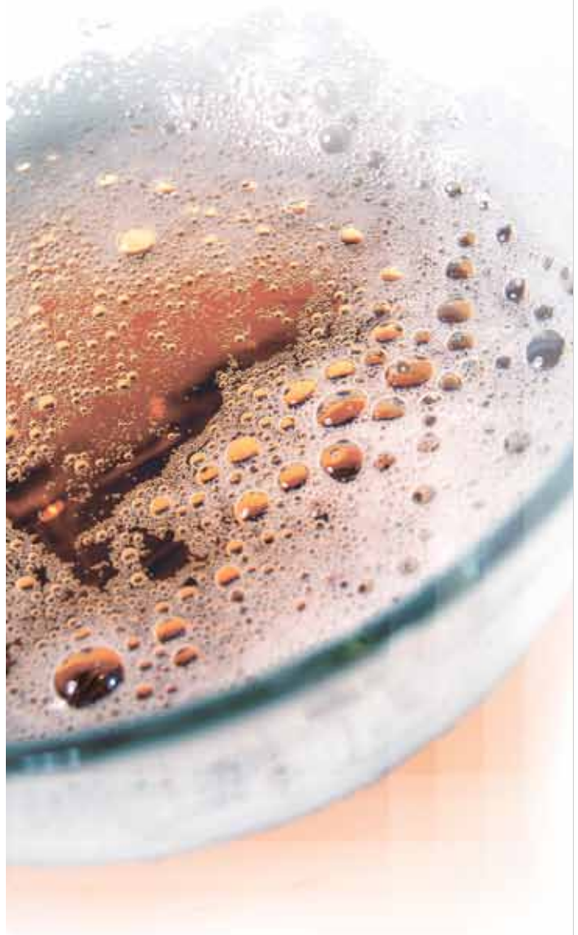
The number of countries that had confirmed their participation in the Yeosu Expo by Aug. 3, 2010: **61**
The number of countries that had confirmed their participation as of Oct, 23, 2011: **103**
Countries that have pulled out: **1**
The final tally: **105**
G-8 countries not participating: **2**
Total budget for the Yeosu Expo: **$1.9 billon**
Expected economic benefits predicted by the Yeosu Organizing Committee: **12.2 trillion won ($11.1 billion)**
Expected number of jobs to be created due to running the expo: **79,000**
The number of Koreans the Yeosu Organizing Committee foresees entering the expo grounds: **3 million**
The ratio of tickets sold as of mid-April to reach that goal, according to the Korea Times: **14 percent**
The number of tickets expected to be sold overseas: **500,000**
Tickets sold as of mid-April, according to the Korea Times: **37,000**
Cost of a "Standard Day Pass" for adults, youth and children, respectively: **33,000 won, 25,000 won, 19,000 won**
Cost of a "Peak Day Pass" (May 12-13, 26-28, Aug. 10-12) for adults, youth, children, respectively: **40,000 won, 30,000, 23,000**
Time in minutes, price in won it takes to fly the Seoul-Yeosu route: **48 (65,000 to 75,000)**
Flights per day by Korean Air and Asiana Air between Yeosu Airport and Seoul's Gimpo Airport: **8**
Time in minutes, price in won it takes to traverse the Seoul-Yeosu route by bullet train: **180 (42,800 won)**
Time in minutes, price in won it takes to bus it on the same route: **330 (19,900 won)**
Time in minutes, price in won it takes the Mugunghwa train to get from Yeosu to Seoul: **300, (26,400)**
The amount of time it would take to explore the expo's 80 thematic and exhibition facilities: **70 hours**
Inhabited islands located within the municipality of Yeosu: **49**
Uninhabited islands: **268**
The number of smoking areas on expo grounds: **0**
Abandoned cement silos utilized as a desalination facility, observation deck, multimedia exhibition and massive pipe organ: **2**
Volume of the pipe organ in decibels: **138.4**
The number of performances that will be held during the course of the expo: **8,000**
Volunteers from Korea and abroad that will provide guided tours, traffic control, parking lot management, interpreting: **13,000**
Volunteers that will blanket social network services with Expo-related information: **1,300**
Size of the LED ceiling in the Expo Digital Gallery: **218.24 m x 30.72 m**
No. of expos before the Yeosu Expo that utilized the sea as the main venue: **0**
Number of hotels within a 2-hour drive of the Yeosu Expo site: **452**
Number of rooms available: **12,878**
Number of people expected to visit Yeosu for the expo: **8 million**
The number of Starbucks in Yeosu: **1**
Construction projects undertaken for high-end hotels and the number of rooms created, respectively: **17, (1,800)**
Temple stay and "church stay" spots available per day, respectively: **1,000, 5,000**
Home stays at farming and fishing villages per day: **50 villages, 250 houses**
The total number of pavilions at the expo: **76**
The number of individual countries with national pavilions: **50**

*All data taken from Yeosu Organizing Committee documentation, the Korea Times, the Korea Herald and other sources in Korea — ed.*





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Filipina Jasmine Lee faces heat as the first naturalized Korean elected into the National Assembly and a surviving victim of the Suwon slayer steps forward.

**In the shadow of Gangnam**
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Every setting sun lights up the glass and steel towers of Gangnam, and they seem to glint imperially, reminding these residents of everything they do not have.

**Bill paying made easy**
Page 30
Here are some tips to make the sometimes-difficult process of paying your bills a little bit easier.



**Seoul Underground's Aaron Cho**
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**Alternative cinemas in Seoul**
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Have you ever seen a film under a hill or over an intersection, or been served cookies in a ritzy private booth at CGV?

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**Girl Scouts Korea: Agents of change**
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Now with 3.2 million members in over 90 countries, including Korea, the Girl Scouts celebrate their 100th anniversary.



**Braai Republic**
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At Braai Republic, a new South African restaurant and pub in Itaewon, you'd almost think you were in a hunting lodge on the savannah.

**Big changes at Big Rock**
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**Now we're cooking with oil**
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WOLFHOUND 02-749-7971
SCROOGE PUB 02-797-8201
SINCHON
LA CELTIQUE 02-312-7774
HUFS
RANDY'S BAR 010 9108 8403
CHUNGDAM
R&B KITCHEN 02 515 7723
DOGOK
CHEZ FLO 02 574 7017

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TRAVELVER'S BAR & GRILL 031-781-5666

BUSAN
THE PARTY 051 711 7770
WOLFHOUND 051-749-7913
88 IN MIAMI 051 731 6488
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CHEONGJU
ROAD KING 043-265-1340

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# MUST READS

*Look for this sign throughout the magazine for articles we recommend this month.*

**In the shadow of Gangnam**
Page 16
Sitting in the shadow of Korea's wealthiest neighborhood seems to be one of the cruelest aspects of life in this panjachon – certainly one of the country's poorest. Every setting sun lights up the glass and steel towers of the former, and they seem to glint imperially, reminding panjachon residents of everything they do not have.



**SuperColorSuper's struggle**
Page 56
In the land of the S150 concert, when you're talking about affordable international acts, the conversation begins and ends with SuperColorSuper. But despite its popularity, Sean Maylone and Violet Hur say they might not put on any more internatonal shows, unless May is a massive success.





**Girl Scouts: agents of change**
Page 86
Girl Scouts in Korea are helping over 400 girls become responsible citizens and women of character and confidence, who make their communities better places.




**Yeosu welcomes the world**
Page 52
Yeosu plays host to the 53rd world exposition from May 12 to Aug. 12, marking what will be one of the biggest international events of the year.



**Hunting a good feed, South African style**
Page 32
Braai Republic is a South African restaurant and pub in Itaewon showcasing South African culture from rugby and lively music, to the massive zebra pelt tacked to the wall.



# The INBOX

*What's on your mind? Share your thoughts on a Groove article: Did you love it? Did it suck? Are you planning a charity concert and you want to spread the word? Let us know on our Facebook page or Twitter and we'll print it here. This is your page to get your message out!*

*Facebook it; tweet it; e-mail it to submissions@groovekorea.com*

## WEBSITE

*RE: Korea's stressed masses*

This article is particularly poignant because the worries of Koreans mirror those of many Americans. Job stability, women in the workplace, marriage, and class disparities are our problems too.
From my personal encounters with Koreans, they tend to feel exceptional because of their concerns. I often feel many of these pressures, and so do many people I know. The entire first-world is changing, and I think it would be beneficial to point out the similarities in our and their situations. I think a great way to bridge some gaps, is to recognize this and talk about it.

***— Skarron***

*RE: Korea's stressed masses*

As a Korean, while I was reading this I felt empathy and bitterness at the same time. Good to know that everyone's concerns are similar. Though it is true that it is hard to change these situations in a short time, we can on the other hand be happy sharing our stories and considering problems from various sides to find out some rooms for improvement.

***— Anonymous***

*RE: Korea's stressed masses*

Nice article. The degree of widespread unhappiness in Korea is palpable, and it saddens me on a pretty regular basis. Reading these testimonials actually choked me up, brought tears to my eyes. Income has risen for decades, but surveys show happiness is actually decreasing. I am a poet, and I work with public school English teachers. I try hard to nudge thinking towards integration of soul and spirit into the curriculum, integration of play and creative expression. Since Confucianism is a strong influence, Right now in Korea, it is past time for the industrial giants like Samsung to step up and give back to the people who put them where they are. They should do it out of principle or appreciation, but if that is not sufficient cause, they should simply do it out of crass understanding of long-term worker productivity schemes. They are literally robbing profits from themselves as they continue to rob Korea of soul and spirit. I would really like to see happiness thrive here. It is a beautiful spring day, and the people of Korea deserve to enjoy it.

***— Cary Bertoncini***

## FACEBOOK

*Open mic night*

We have something special in store for you guys. Once a month we will choose a group, cause, charity, local business, artist, and so on to promote at IOM. You can hand out coupons or literature, have a table, sell albums, and whatnot. So come out and have a good time at Itaewon Open Mic with Red Studio! If you have a cause, charity, group etc, that would be interested in taking part in PROMO Night, talk to one of the organizers, or send an e-mail to itaewonopenmic@gmail.com.

***— Jeremy Rondell***

*Buddha's Birthday*

Many will soon be celebrating Buddha's Birthday. As part of the celebrations, Myogaksa Temple will be offering information sessions about Buddha's life. We will be making lotus lanterns and listening to the energetic and funny head nun tell us about Buddha's life. The meetings will be held every other Sunday until the end of May. Myogaksa Temple is located near Dongmyo Station, exit 2. The session goes from 11 am~4 pm. Free lunch will be offered at noon. There is no cost;donations are welcome.

***— Tara Douglas***



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*Groove Korea Magazine 2012*





# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Meet some of the people working day and night to bring your community to Korea.



### Elaine Ramirez
USA

Elaine tends to go wherever the wind carries her, and the most recent gust has swept her to South Korea. After stints in New York and Chile, the California native now works as an editor in Seoul. When not editing for Groove or her newspaper, she's off riding her motorbike along the Han, exploring the far corners of the peninsula, or sleeping. Elaine is a contributing editor.



### Kim Duk-hwa
Korea

Born in Busan, the 34-year-old photographer Kim Duk-hwa – known professionally as "DukHwa" – is a mainstay in the Korean fashion industry. He shoots for Vogue Korea, W Magazine, Elle Korea and others. He says he gets his inspiration from his extremely good-looking girlfriend and global travels. DukHwa shot Groove Korea's cover this month.



### Luc Forsyth
USA

Luc Forsyth is a photojournalist specializing in social and humanitarian issues. His work often focuses on developing countries where he attempts to move beyond the surface of events to expose the human aspects of a story. He looks for dignity and hope rather than despair and desperation wherever possible. Luc contributed "In the shadow of Gangnam" to this month's Groove Korea.



### Rayiaz Khan
USA

Rayiaz Khan is a Seoul-based photojournalist. He specializes in low light event photography and has covered events ranging from concerts and college sports to multi-billion dollar space rovers and rockets. He's passionate about all things photography and can be found wondering the streets of Seoul with his camera, looking for moments to capture. Rayiaz shot for the SuperColorSuper story.



### Daniel Sanchez
Colombia

Last time he went to the doctor, he was asked: "Do you smoke or drink?" – "No," he said. "Do you do drugs? You said you are from Colombia, you have a lot of that s**t there." Now you know where he is from. Daniel is our Art Director and has been a freelance Graphic Designer for the past five years or so. He loves singing, eating steak and listening to jazz music.

# On the COVER

## SuperColorSuper

SuperColorSuper has been rocking the indie music scene in Korea for years. Where other promoters have been more interested in gouging fans, SuperColorSuper has made a name for itself by putting on affordable shows. But despite its popularity, Sean Maylone and Violet Hur say they need a massively successful May just to survive.

See the full story on Page 56.




**Cover photo by** Duk-Hwa
**Design by** Daniel Sanchez

**Our past three issues:**




*April 2012*
Out with God. Cherry Blossom festivals & Korea's Stressed Masses




*March 2012*
Ballons of hope for North Korea. The Expat Apartment Project.




*February 2012*
The 3 Wise Monkeys, The Seoul Metro Project & Rock concerts.

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www.groovekorea.com

# This month's EVENTS

*May 1st - May 31st*

*All the events published in this calendar are subject to unforeseen changes by the promoters. Groove Korea does NOT take responsibility for any mis-sunderstandings or third party damage.

For suggestions or comments email Matthew Lamers: mattlamers@groovekorea.com

## Event *of the month*

Groove Korea is teaming up with Community Korea to throw a party @ Hill Side bar in Itaewon on May 19. See calendar for details.

***PINK INDICATES A FESTIVAL OR HOLIDAY***

**Tuesday 1**
- Festival: Damyang Bamboo Festival; May 1-6; Damnyang, South Jeolla Province; http://bamboo.uokdc.com
- Food: 2 For 1 fish & chips @ Wolfhound (Tuesdays); wolfhoundpub.com
- Exhibit: "From the East to the West and Back" by Koen Van Den Broek; thru May 19; see Exhibits page for info

**Wednesday 2**
- Festival: Wild Tea Cultural Festival; May 2-6; Hadong, South Gyeongsang Province; http://festival.hadong.go.kr
- Social: Quiz night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Wednesdays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com
- Exhibit: "Art Saves the World" by Thitz @ Chungdamn Art Center; see Exhibits page for info

**Thursday 3**
- Festival: Yangyeongsi Herb Medicine Festival; May 2-6; Daegu; http://herb.daegu.go.kr
- Business: AMCHAM-KORUS FTA Utilization Seminar! @ Lotte Hotel; 8 a.m.; www.amchamkorea.org
- Festival: Traditional Teapot Festival in Myungyeong City, Gyeongsangbuk-do; to May 6

**Friday 4**
- Festival: Sancheong Medicinal Herb Festival; May 3-9; Sancheong, South Gyeongsang Province; http://scherb.or.kr
- Music: Blonde Redhead in Seoul; 67,000 won advance; sc-stickets@gmail.com
- Dance: Audio XL @ Club Phantom in Seoul; 20,000 won

**Saturday 5**
- Food: Tomatillo Korea Cinco de Mayo Party @ Gangnam Finance Center IF Park; 12 pm-8 pm
- Festival: Ganghwa Dolmen Culture Festival; May 5-6; Ganghwa, Incheon; www.ghfestival.com
- Family: Children's Day, go to www.groovekorea.com for a list of events.

**Sunday 6**
- Festival: Hanji Culture Festival; May 3-6; Jeonju, North Jeolla Province; www.jhanji.or.kr
- Music: Morrissey in Seoul @ AX-Korea; ax-korea.co.kr; 7 pm
- Festival: Damyang Bamboo Festival; May 1-6; Damnyang, South Jeolla Province; http://bamboo.uokdc.com

**Monday 7**
- Festival: Busan International Performing Arts Festival; May 4-13; www.bipaf.org
- Social: Open mic @ Tony's in Itaweon (Mondays); tonysitaewon.com
- Exhibit: "New York New Work" by Andrew Lane, Beth Livensperger etc.; thru May 12; see Exhibits page for info

**Tuesday 8**
- Music: Sergio Mende in Seoul @ Olympic Hall; 60,000-120,000 won; http://ticket.interpark.com
- Family: Parents' Day
- Lecture: "South Korea's Overseas Development Assistance Experience" by RAS; raskb.com

**Wednesday 9**
- Korean class: Registraton for KOTRA's free Korean classes; deadline is May 11; classes start May 21; www.kotra.or.kr
- Food: Cheese steak sandwich night @ Hollywood Grill in Itaewon; (02) 749-1659
- Social: Standup comedy (Wednesdays) @ Tony's in Itaewon; tonysitaewon.com

**Thursday 10**
- Tea time: The Korean tea course @ National Folk Museum of Korea; for women; minbakedu@gmail.com
- Beer: Men's night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Thursdays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com
- Social: Quiz night @ 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon; win beer; 3alleypub.com

**Saturday 12**
- Expo: Yeosu World Expo in – you guessed it – Yeosu, South Jeolla Province; see our Destinations section for details
- Music: Asobi Seksu in Seoul @ Rolling Hall; advance 35,000 won; http://supercolorsuper.com
- Music: Rock Your Seoul; PLUR fundraiser @ CLUB TA, Hongdae; 10 pm

**Monday 14**
- Food: Wing Night @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Mondays); 400 won/wing; (02) 333-1604
- Exhibit: "At HoMe: Living with Art & Design" @ The Columns in Itaewon; thru May 26; see Exhibits page
- Food: Wing night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Mondays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com

**Wednesday 16**
- Festival: Boseong Green Tea Festival; May 16-20; Boseong, South Jeolla Province dahyang.boseong.go.kr
- Music: Rachael Yamagata @ Sangsang Madang in Hongdae; 8 pm; http://www.ssartpia.kr
- Social: Standup comedy (Wednesdays) @ Tony's in Itaewon; tonysitaewon.com

**Friday 18**
- Festival: Lotus Lantern Festival @ Bongeunsa Temple (best place) ; May 18-20; www.llf.or.kr
- Theatre: "Our Country's Good" by Cut Glass Theater; May 18-27; cutglasstheatre@gmail.com
- Exhibit: "Living Absence" by Mayumi Terada @ Museum of Photography; thru June 9; see Exhibits page for info

**Sunday 20**
- Music: Seoul Jazz Festival @ Olympic Park; 99,000 won (1 day), 178,000 won (2 days)
- Self-help: AA meeting @ the International Lutheran Church; 5 p.m.
- Festival: Lotus Lantern Festival @ Bongeunsa Temple (best place) ; May 18-20; www.llf.or.kr

**Tuesday 22**
- Food: Pasta night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Tuesdays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com
- Lecture: Zen (Seon) Meditation and its Benefits by RAS @ Somerset Palace
- Art: Gansong Museum of Art, guided tour with SIWA; 10 am; siwapage.com

**Thursday 24**
- Social: Open mic @ Orange Tree in HBC (Thursdays); (02) 749-8202
- Festival: Eumseong Pumba Festival @ Eumseong, North Chungcheong Province; May 24-27; http://pumba21.com
- Tour: Blue House tour with Seoul International Women's Association; siwapage.com

**Saturday 26**
- Music: World DJ Festival @ Yangpyeong (Gyeonggi-do); 77,000 won (1 day), 100,000 won (2 days)
- Music: Rage, Silent Eye, Ishtar @ Sangsang Madang in Hongdae; 6:30 pm; http://www.ssartpia.kr
- Music: Green Plugged Music Festival @ Hangang Park; 55,000 won (1 day). 88,000 won (weekend)

**Monday 28**
- Food: Wing night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Mondays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com
- Music: Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds @ AX-Korea; 99,000 won; ax-korea.co.kr; 8 pm

**Wednesday 30**
- Food: Ongoing: Fish Market Tour, Vegan Taste Tour, Night Dining Tour; ongofood.com
- Social: Quiz night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Wednesdays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com
- Beauty: Health & Beauty Fair @ Grand Ambassador Hotel; 9:30 am; siwapage.com

**Friday 11**
- Music: Asobi Seksu in Busan @ Vinal Underground; advance 20,000 won; http://supercolorsuper.com
- Music: Musiq Soulchild @ AX-Korea; 99,000 won; ax-korea.co.kr
- Drink: Bucket night @ Beer O'Clock in Sinchon (Fridays); beeroclock.ca

**Sunday 13**
- Food: Big Rock's famous Sunday brunch in Gangnam, Seoul
- Russian lessons: 2-4 pm every Sunday @ Seoul Global Village Center, Myeongdong; aruskor.org
- Self-help: Codependents Anonymous meeting @ the International Lutheran Church; 5 pm

**Tuesday 15**
- Beer: 15,000 won all-you-can-drink beer @ Beer Garden, Renaissance Hotel, Gangnam (every day, 6-9 p.m.); (02) 2222-8630
- Holiday: Teachers' Day
- Exhibit: "Your Uncertain Shadow" @ PKM Trinity Gallery by Olafur Eliasson; thru May 31; see Exhibits page for detailed info

**Thursday 17**
- Exhibit: "Modern Myths" by Veronica Bailey @ Gaain Gallery; see Exhibits page for info
- Festival: Icheon Ceramic Festival; April 28-May 20; www.ceramic.or.kr
- Drink: Student Night @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Thursdays); free beer with burger; (02) 333-1604

**Saturday 19**
- GROOVE: Groove Korea & Community Korea Party @ Hill Side bar in Itaewon; 7 p.m.; come out to meet people and sip heavily discounted drinks
- Fundraiser: Rock fundraiser @ Strange Fruit in Hongdae
- Music: Seoul Jazz Festival @ Olympic Park; 99,000 won (1 day), 178,000 won (2 days)

**Monday 21**
- Festival: Chuncheon Intl Mime Festival; May 20-27; in Chuncheon, Gangwon Province; www.mimefestival.com
- Food: Learn about Korea's cuisine with O'ngo culinary tour of Seoul; ongofood.com
- Info: Open registration to volunteer through Itaewon Global Village Center; global.seoul.go.kr/itaewon

**Wednesday 23**
- Exhibit: "Personages" by Louise Bourgeois @ Kukje Gallery; May 23–June 29; see Exhibits page for info
- Tour: SIWA's historic Jeong-dong neighborhood guided tour by Prof. D. Mason; 9:30 am; siwapage.com
- Social: Quiz night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Wednesdays); http://craftworkstaphouse.com

**Friday 25**
- Music: Haebangcheon Music Festival in Seoul; www.deeleebob.com/hbcfest.htm (Friday and Saturday)
- Drink: Bucket night @ Beer O'Clock in Sinchon (Fridays); beeroclock.ca

**Sunday 27**
- Music: World DJ Festival @ Yangpyeong (Gyeonggi-do); 77,000 won (1 day), 100,000 won (2 days)
- Art: Gallery Golmok Art Bazaar @ Gallery Golmok (Sundays); see Exhibits page for info
- Music: Green Plugged Music Festival @ Hangang Park;55,000 won (1 day). 88,000 won (weekend)

**Tuesday 29**
- Music: Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds @ AX-Korea; 99,000 won; ax-korea.co.kr; 8 pm
- Info: Open registration to volunteer through Itaewon Global Village Center; global.seoul.go.kr/itaewon

**Thursday 31**
- Free bus!: Seoul-Busan every day except Monday; Seoul departure 8 a.m.; Busan departure 4 p.m.; visitkorea@chesstours.co.kr
- Free bus!: Seoul-Jeonju every day except Monday; Seoul departure 8 a.m.; Jeounju Departure 5 p.m.; visitkorea@chesstours.co.kr

# KOREA BEAT

KOREA BEAT
National News

ALL STORIES TRANSLATED BY NATHAN SCHWARTZMAN AT WWW.KOREABEAT.COM AND EDITED BY GROOVE KOREA FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY. THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED HERE DO NOT REPRESENT THOSE OF GROOVE KOREA. — ED.

## BRIEFS

### Korean politician rebuked for comments on Dokdo

At the entrance to Jangsan Station in Busan, members of a Dokdo organization held a demonstration to criticize a local politician for a comment in which he referred to Dokdo as "an internationally disputed area."

The statement is controversial because Korea and Japan have been feuding for decades over the rightful owner of the uninhabitable islet in the East Sea. It is extremely rare for a Korean to admit that the islet is "disputed territory."

### Korean-American boxer charged with smuggling

The Incheon Metropolitan Police announced that it arrested a 30-year-old Korean-American professional boxer and eight other people on charges of smuggling Philopon, a Japanese pharmaceutical methamphetamine, from Los Angeles and distributing it in Korea.

Police also arrested but did not detain an organized crime member.

The police did not release the name of the boxer. The second-generation Korean-American is accused of smuggling 400 grams of amphetamines and 300 ecstasy pills from Los Angeles from November of 2010 to January of this year.

The men placed the drugs inside condoms, after which they stuffed them in their rectums for the duration of the 10-hour flight.

### *Accused American man extradited back to Korea*

The Daegu Metropolitan Police Agency announced that a 56-year-old man – formerly employed in Korea as a native speaker English teacher – has been arrested in the United States and extradited back to Korea to stand trial.

He is accused of sexually molesting four elementary school boys. The police did not release his name.

Police claim the American molested a boy, who was then 14 years old, and the others on five occasions from June 2 to July 3, 2010.

He fled to the United States as soon as his crime was reported in the media on July 7, 2010.

### HAS SUWON SLAYER STRUCK BEFORE?

Following the confession of 42-year-old Oh Won-chun to the murder of a young woman in Suwon, a young woman in Ansan has come forward to say that she was also attacked by the infamous Suwon slayer. Police say that her attacker had a similar modus operandi.

"In July of 2010 I was kidnapped by a person similar to Mr. Oh and escaped," the 26-year-old woman said, according to a statement by the Gyeonggi Provincial Police Agency. The incident occurred about 20 months ago near an apartment complex in the Sangrok-gu district of Ansan.

"He suddenly came out from behind some parked car loaded with cargo and reeked of alcohol," she said. The method of surprising a woman by hiding behind an object is similar to Mr. Oh's method, according to police. The police said Oh committed the murder while extremely intoxicated and hid behind a telephone pole in front of a residential building.

The Ansan victim was able to escape without sustaining serious injury, but is still receiving psychological treatment. After she reported the incident to local police, they failed to conduct a thorough investigation, she said. The woman, who requested anonymity, told the police that the incident took place in front a CCTV camera, but they decided not to view the tape.

She says that the recently apprehended killer's characteristics are very similar to her assailant. Now seeing her claim as credible, police formed an investigatory team. "After Oh's appearance was published, we have received some tips that people were assaulted by a similar man," said a member of the police. "We plan to swiftly investigate all credible leads."

In Korea, the names of accused criminals are usually not published and their identities protected.

This has been changing in recent years, most notably in 2009 when Internet users uncovered and disseminated the identity of an accused serial killer. Since then, there have been a number of other similar instances of media publishing killers' names.

The rape-murder of the woman in Suwon is the latest example. The Dong-A Ilbo was the first to report the identity of the 42-year-old, including the Hanja of his name.

Oh has confessed that he killed the victim when she rebuffed his attempts to pay her for sex.

### BRIBERY SCANDALS DAMAGE REPUTATION OF SEOUL POLICE

The nation's most powerful loan shark allegedly funneled tens of millions of won in bribes to dozens of Seoul police officers. Known only by his surname Choi, the 58-year-old was arrested in April on charges of criminal intimidation and extortion.

During their investigation, prosecutors uncovered a list of recipients that showed he had bribed police officers to paper over the case. Prosecutors plan to investigate everyone on the list.

This "loan shark king list," as the media has dubbed it, comes just days after the "room salon emperor list" was made public by 40-year-old Lee Gyeong-baek, a hooker industry heavyweight, who also handed out bribes to dozens of Seoul police officers.

Many worry that the scandals will damage the reputation of Seoul's police force.

Choi was accused of assault in March of 2009 and bribed two police officers with 13 million won to secure favorable treatment, prosecutors say. In 2007, he handed police officers a shopping bag stuffed with 50 million won to "get rid" of drug charges against an acquaintance.

Choi is known to have run illegal gambling parlors and pocketed hundreds of millions of won. Separately from the prosecutors' investigation, the National Tax Service is bringing charges against Choi for failing to pay income taxes on his illegal income.

Choi is behind bars for allegedly extorting over 900 million won from the head of the real estate investment trust company Dasan Rich in 2010 by saying "everyone will find out how corrupt you are and your business will be delisted." The man was convicted of embezzlement and sentenced to four years in prison last month. The company was delisted from the stock market last June.

The major crimes division of the Seoul Prosecutors' Office, which was in charge of the Dasan Rich case, investigated Choi but did not take judicial action. Choi was later arrested by the prosecutors' office in Daegu.

### FIRESTORM OF RACISM GREETS FIRST ELECTED NATURALIZED KOREAN

After 35-year-old Filipina Jasmine Lee became the first naturalized Korean elected into the National Assembly last month, she faced a firestorm of racism from a small but boisterous pocket of Korean netizens.

Saenuri Party member Lee won her riding in the April 11 general election. In the wake of her victory, some cybercitizens wrote angry, seemingly illogical attacks on online message boards. "Now there will be illegal immigrants doing what they want and more sham marriages," one person wrote.

Some fear that Lee's election could lead to an increase in anti-foreigner sentiment and make marriage immigrants targets for anti-foreigner groups.

Most marriage immigrants were reluctant to speak publicly for this article on Lee's landmark victory. They said they feared being attacked by netizens in the same way as Lee has been.

There are nearly 200,000 marriage immigrants in Korea.

A marriage immigrant from Vietnam, who asked to be referred to as Mrs. A, said she is surprised by the backlash. "I thought that it would be a good thing to have Lee representing us in the Saenuri Party and I voted for her, but I don't understand why she is being terribly insulted (by some netizens)," she said. "From what I know, Korean people also take jobs in America. And in America, their hard work is recognized ... what do Korean people have against Jasmine?" Mrs. A requested anonymity, saying that, "I might be attacked the same way."

Another woman, who asked to go by Mrs. B, immigrated to Korea nine years ago from Mongolia. "When I see what people are writing about Jasmine, I feel heartsick," said the 35-year-old. "How can they say such things when they don't even know much about her? Before they start smashing away on their keyboards, they should think about how hard it is for her to live and work as she does."

Hwang Eui-sun, the Taiwan-born head of the Multicultural Families' Organization in Seoul, said she empathizes with Lee. "As marriage immigrants, we can feel that Jasmine's heart is just as heavy as ours."

Hwang, who has three children from her marriage to a Korean man in 2002, has sometimes appeared on television espousing tolerance. But after those appearances, netizens would often lob racist and sexist comments at her such as, "She came here to sell her body," she said. "Those things always get written on Internet sites for people who oppose Korean society becoming more diverse ... Korean people use the phrase 'multiculturalism' a lot, but the culture appears to not yet be fully mature."

### FORMER CULT MEMBERS TELL THEIR STORIES

Jeong Myeong-seok, the cult leader currently imprisoned for raping a female member of his cult, is now accused of having ordered physical retribution be carried out against former cult members who fled overseas. Former members who directly participated in the attacks held a press conference in March to come clean on their crimes.

The group included Min Jong-woon, who joined the cult while in high school and spent the next 20 years of his life believing Jeong Myeong-seok to be the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Min was serving as an aide to Jeong when he said he started committing "acts of terror" against people deemed anti-Jeong Myeong-seok.

Min, who at the time was a clergyman in the church, said he was conflicted about the crimes against former cult members, but carried them out after being contacted directly by Jeong, who in 2003 fled the country upon rape accusations.

"I believed what Jeong Myeong-seok said, and I committed terrorism on people against him, and believed it to be the road to truth and to heaven," Min said at the press conference.

Min had lived in hiding over the past nine years, but said a change of heart led him to expose these events. After the press conference, police took him away to aid their investigation into a 2003 assault.

Others who were leading figures in the cult over the past 20 years spoke of more crimes.

The former members spoke of their regret that they had believed Jeong Myeong-seok to have been the second coming of Jesus and that they could be redeemed be having sex with him.

"We were all under the delusion that we were in a historic moment through the Lord, that we were to be his loyal brothers and children. Everybody was led by him, lectured by him, overseen by him, and I regret so deeply that the abyss of death was brought closer," said Kim Gyeong-cheon, a former vice-chairman in the cult.

## BRIEFS

### Dutch teacher, U.S. soldier arrested on dope charges

Seoul police have arrested a 28-year-old Dutch national on charges of distributing ecstasy and growing and selling marijuana. A U.S. soldier was charged with possession of illegal drugs.

According to police, the Dutchman is accused of growing 45 marijuana plants using lights and fans in his home in Itaewon since February of this year. The man, who teaches Dutch to Koreans working in the Netherlands Embassy, is also accused of selling over 20 ecstasy pills to the American soldier.

Prosecutors are investigating to determine whether he may have committed other crimes.

### Seoul police consider prosecuting serial bully

Considerable interest has grown in a case in which students who bullied classmates over a period of time exceeding one year have been punished by a court. Although it involved little physical violence, the victimized student suffered insults and threats over an extended period of time and the case is being seen as a measure of police willingness to crack down on such long-term bullying.

The Seodaemun Police Station in Seoul announced that it had arrested 17 students, including the 15-year-old ring leader for insulting and bullying classmates for more than one year. Police say eight of the students could be prosecuted for assault.

Police plan to refer those students to prosecutors for indictment.

According to police, the 15-year-old student refused to admit other students into their group, then bullied them from February of last year through March of this year by insulting them and hitting their heads. They apparently chose one student in each class to be a target.

"Although there was no severe violence or theft, the victimized students suffered for a long time and were affected psychologically," said a Seodaemun police officer. "All 13 of them considered suicide."

The officer added that, "when people think of school violence, the first thing that comes to mind is physical assault; but we believe that this kind of hidden ostracism is what leads to that and so we made the arrests."

INSIGHT
In the shadow of Gangnam

# IN THE SHADOW OF GANGNAM

**Story & Photos by** Luc Forsyth

If you weren't looking for the Guryong panjachon, you wouldn't know it was there. Nestled into the side of a mountain and purposely hidden from view by a ragged fence of cloth and sheet metal, this panjachon, literally translating as wooden board town, won't appear on any tourist maps. And while many people are aware of its existence, they couldn't tell you how to get there if you asked.

From the outside, Guryong is little more than a symbol of Korea's social inequalities, but within its corrugated steel walls exists a real community, where people live their lives paycheck to paycheck, charcoal briquette to charcoal briquette.

Starting in the 1960s, Korea – as with much of East Asia – adopted a guiding principle that rising incomes would lead to better standards of housing. This philosophy depended largely on the growth of private companies, and was also supported by favorable interest rates and mortgage financing packages, along with improved means for the public to attain them.

*Sitting in the shadow of Korea's wealthiest neighborhood seems to be one of the cruelest aspects of life in this panjachon — certainly one of the country's poorest. Every setting sun lights up the glass and steel towers of the former, and they seem to glint imperially, reminding panjachon residents of everything they do not have.*

However, particularly due to rapid urban population growth, Korea's housing supply fell short of demand. Not only did prices skyrocket, but shortages of affordable housing led to the growth of slum settlements, particularly in urban areas such as Seoul.

The Guryong panjachon was established by residents who were pushed out of their homes by a government keen to clean up Korea's image for the 1988 Summer Olympic Games.

Over the course of several months I visited this panjachon about a dozen times, ultimately forging truly unique relationships with a few of its community members and gaining insight into one of Korea's most stigmatized neighborhoods.

## GLASS AND STEEL TOWERS

After passing under the large metal gate that straddles its main road, the first thing I notice are the hikers; the community sits at the base of a mountain, making it a popular weekend trek for outsiders. Though middle-aged men outfitted in the latest mountaineering gear are a common sight on or near any Korean mountain, there is something especially strange about seeing them here. The juxtaposition is glaring; to my left is a steady stream of people dressed in brightly colored polypropylene hiking clothes, the latest in moisture-wicking technology, and to my right is a drab sprawl of one-story shacks. Mounds of charcoal briquettes, pink and black, line the road and spill into the ditch. There must be tens of thousands of them, and I am told later that this is one of the ways panjachon residents have found to generate income. Further along the road, which wraps around the community in a wavy crescent shape, is evidence of the community's dangerously improvised infrastructure. The ground is scorched, and twisted metal bars are all that are left from what was once a cluster of houses. Fires are common in this panjachon, often caused by jury-rigged gas systems or the innumerable, densely woven electrical cables above the rooftops siphoning electricity from Seoul's power grid. The hikers linger nearby, smoking cigarettes and chatting as they contemplate the wreckage.

From here I turn off the main road and follow a small track of packed earth that cuts through the heart of Guryong.



*The Guryong panjachon was established by residents who were pushed out of their homes by a government keen to clean up Korea's image for its international debut — the 1988 Summer Olympic Games.*

Every piece of land that isn't occupied by a house is used for urban farming. I am surrounded by small rice fields and compost heaps. Scarecrows made of old t-shirts and dried grass stand watch. As I reflect on the resourcefulness of people in adverse situations, several elderly women pass by, some who flash cheerful smiles, and some of who look on with thinly veiled mistrust, like I am some sort of intruder. I can't really tell if I am welcome or not.

Moving deeper into the panjachon, the hikers begin to become scarce, apparently not interested in deviating from the walking route. In front of me, basking in the sunlight on the roof of a house is one of the roughest looking cats I have ever seen. His face is an impossible mass of scar tissue centered around two glowing eyes the color of Post-it notes. His fur is mottled grey and looks to have the texture of a coconut husk. As I step forward and take his picture he stares at me with great indifference. He is clearly in charge here.

For such a small community, there are an incredible number of churches; wood and metal crosses dot the skyline. I scan the horizon and try to count them, but I am distracted by the view of Gangnam. Sitting in the shadow of Korea's wealthiest neighborhood seems to be one of the cruelest aspects of life in this panjachon – certainly one of the country's poorest. Every setting sun lights up the glass and steel towers of the former, and they seem to glint imperially, reminding panjachon residents of everything they do not have.

**A 'KOREAN DREAM'**

On this particular day I am looking for Guangfan Piao, a Chinese immigrant laborer and truck driver. I had been visiting Guryong for several months in an attempt to make local connections, but no one seemed willing to speak with me – until Guangfan called out one day with an enthusiastic "hello foreigner!"

He can usually be found in the recycling yard where he lives and earns a living by collecting metal and cardboard from around Seoul and reselling it to city landfills. As I pass through the yard's front gate I see a sleepy looking man in sagging long underwear. After squinting at me for a moment (a nurse friend of mine, after seeing some photos of him, thinks he may have glaucoma in his left eye), a broad grin spreads across his face. Thin and weathered, his features are deeply lined, signs of a lifetime spent working outdoors.



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He also happens to be urinating onto a large pile of garbage.

The yard is small but obviously well used. While normally bustling with activity, this is Sunday, the one day of the week when the workers are off. A two-story mountain of cardboard boxes lines the southern wall, uninterrupted except for a small niche where two white dogs are chained up, barking constantly at their restraints. An aged and rusted garbage truck has been backed up to the pile, waiting to be loaded.

On the opposite wall is a gnarled pile of scrap metal. Guangfan, almost proudly, demonstrates the sorting system. There is aluminum siding from a construction site in Sindaebang, rebar from a demolished highway, and steel from old car parts. Despite the impression of disorder, everything is in its proper place. Green glass on the left, brown glass on the right, stacked in rough pyramids. The plastics pile is a mixture of shattered garden furniture and forgotten children's toys, the stickers of their once blue eyes peeling away.

There is a small housing block as well, divided into three rooms. The unit closest to the front gate is reserved for the manager and his wife, and is slightly bigger than the others. A sliding glass window is set into the wall so he can monitor the yard's daily happenings. The roof is piled high with mesh sacks of crushed beer cans and a random assortment of wooden beams. A faded Everlast punching bag hangs from an ancient chain, looking neglected and ravaged by weather.

Guangfan scolds me jokingly for a few minutes about being late and then ushers me into his house, a bare room with mildew-stained walls. There is no bed, just a dresser, a TV and a water-dispensing machine. Enormous bags of instant coffee mix, a calendar and a cheap wall-clock are the only adornments. He hands me a paper cup and we sit cross-legged on the floor, sipping the coffee, super-saturated with sugar and artificial cream powder. When these are finished, the cups are rinsed and refilled with some rice wine I have brought.

According to Guangfan, a combination of high unemployment and low wages, forced him to leave China in search of money to support his family. Granted a five-year Korean work permit, Guangfan left everything behind for the bright lights of Seoul. Now 67 years old, the courage it must have taken to make such a drastic life change is undeniable.

In a remarkably short amount of time he has adapted so well that it was unclear that he wasn't Korean until he pulled a dog-eared Chinese passport out of his dresser to prove his date of birth. He speaks Korean fluently and his neighbors smile at him amiably whenever they pass, addressing him by his adopted Korean moniker of Park Kwang-beom. This is his reality – his "Korean Dream."

By Guangfan's own admission, however, life in Korea hasn't been easy. He misses his wife deeply; it has been over three years since he has seen her. He works six days per week, moving vast distances across Seoul to collect recyclables.



*By Guangfan's own admission, however, life in Korea hasn't been easy. He misses his wife deeply; it has been over three years since he has seen her. He works six days per week, moving vast distances across Seoul to collect recyclables. When he does get a day off, all of his co-workers go home to their families, leaving him alone in the compound with one other man who also lives there full time. There is very little for them to do other than drink soju and sleep.*

When he does get a day off, all of his co-workers go home to their families, leaving him alone in the compound with one other man who also lives there full time. There is very little for them to do other than drink soju and sleep.

Since the majority of his earnings are sent back to China, his recreational budget is small. Though he often makes a show of having cash, spending frivolously on other people, he buys almost nothing for himself.

But what is most striking about Guangfan and the other panjachon residents who live in the shadow of Gangnam is that they do not seem to complain. While wealthier Seoulites lament missed promotions or a cracked smart phone screen, Guangfan relishes simple pleasures. He takes joy in small gifts like a plastic pen set or a cheaply printed photograph of himself. He doesn't seem aware of the fact that the rest of the city expects him to be unhappy.

The people here are nothing if not adaptable. As the city and the corporations who own the land debate what to do with the panjachon and its people, the future of the neighborhood is uncertain. Just over a year ago, the Seoul Metropolitan Government announced redevelopment plans to be carried out in Guryong by the state-owned SH Construction. The long-term result is that the poor will either migrate to another slum or create a new one. None of the government's initiatives will work here, say critics: These people are so poor that they will certainly find the government's below-market priced housing to be unaffordable.

But as Guangfan said to me on my last visit, "(Living here) is not perfect, and often it is hard, but for now it is home."

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent those of Groove Korea. To comment, e-mail opinion@groovekorea.com. — Ed.



*Have a question?*
Submit your banking questions to farnsworth@shinhan.com

# *Bill paying* made easy

**By** Michelle Farnsworth **/ Illustration by** Adela Ordoñez




Dear Michelle,
*How do I pay my bills?*
*—Bill Payer*

There are several ways to pay your local bills.

**Online**

First you have to register for online banking in person at your local bank branch in Korea and then download your digital certificate. Next, just log in to the personal Internet banking service on your bank's website and choose "domestic transfer." Then make a domestic transfer to the bank account number listed on your bill.

Usually, there are five or six different banks listed on the local bill. If you are using a bank that is listed, send it to that bank's account. If your bank is not listed, just send it to any one of those accounts.

You may want to leave a "memo" depending on what type of bill you are paying.

"Dear Michelle: Banking Advice for Expats" is a monthly column written by Michelle Farnsworth. Michelle is the Foreign Client Relationship Manager in the Shinhan Bank Foreign Customer Department. Please visit "Shinhan Expat Banking" on Facebook for more information. The banking information provided in this column is based on Shinhan Bank policies and may not be applicable to all banks in Korea. – Ed.





*Set up automatic bill payments by visiting your local bank branch with your ID and the bills you would like to have paid automatically each month. Then never think about it again.*

For the standard gas or electricity bills, you do not need to type anything in the memo box because the utility company's bank account info that you find on your bill is a unique account number just for you. However, you can type in the bill payer's number (), as found on your bill, if you like.

For other types of bills, you may want to write your name, apartment number, bill payer's number, or other information that can identify you with the payment.

**At any ATM**

At an ATM, just insert your check card and choose "Transfer." Then enter the amount and bank account number that are listed on your bill. You can pay your bills at any bank's ATM, but be aware that you may have to pay a transfer fee.

**Automatically**

Set up automatic bill payments by visiting your local bank branch with your ID and the bills you would like to have paid automatically each month. Your teller will link your account to your bills. Then, all you have to do is be sure you have sufficient funds in your account on the designated payment date each month.

Or, if you, or a friend, can speak Korean, you can easily call the company directly and set up your automatic monthly bill payments by phone.

**At a special bill-paying machine**

At most bank branches you can find a special bill-paying machine called a . These machines are usually only available in Korean, but the guard will usually be happy to assist you. Just insert your check card and your paper bill. The machine will scan the bill. Once you confirm, the amount will be immediately and automatically withdrawn from your account. Please note that you can only use these special bill-paying machines at your own bank.

**At a bank teller desk**

Of course, you can always pay your local bills at the bank teller counter of your local bank branch, but it is much more efficient to use one of the quicker, more convenient methods described above. If you use cash, you can pay your bills at any branch of any bank in Korea.

**At the post office**

If you use cash, you can also pay your bills at any post office in Korea.

Please note that while there are many options available to help you pay your bills here, it is not possible to pay overseas bills directly from your account in Korea. You will have to first make an overseas remittance to your overseas account and pay the bill from there.

CONTACT MICHELLE

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# Hunting a good feed, South African-style

**Story by** Josh Foreman / **Photos by** Melissa Hubley



*The lamb chops at Braai are divine – juicy, thick and slightly charred on the outside.*



FOOD & DRINK
Restaurant review

Chris Truter's flirtation with charcuterie began in 2006. Back at home in South Africa he killed a kudu – a large antelope species with twisted horns. When he returned to Seoul, he did so with eight kilograms of kudu jerky – or "biltong" – in his luggage. It lasted a month. He wanted more. So he started making it himself, with beef. His recipe got pretty good, and the owner of Phillies in Haebangchon asked if he would start supplying the pub. He did, and so it began.

Now, five years later, Truter is the co-owner of Braai Republic, a new South African restaurant and pub in Itaewon. The restaurant is a showcase of South African culture, from the rugby jerseys on display (one signed by the coach of the national team) to the lively music to the massive zebra pelt tacked to the wall.

Sitting there at the big wooden tables, listening to the drums, hearing and smelling meat sizzling in the kitchen, you'd almost think you were in a hunting lodge on the savannah.

Meat is the focus of the menu at Braai Republic. There are several lamb dishes to choose from, and you can tell when you speak to Truter that lamb is where his heart lies.

He and Roddy Bancroft, the other owner, buy racks whole and cut them down into chops in-house. We tried three iterations of the lamb there – a grilled chop, a sausage, and a stew.

The chop was the highlight of the meal. Slightly charred on the outside, it was tender, juicy, thick and fatty. It came with sweet onion marmalade. As an entrée with creamed spinach, the chops cost 17,000 won, but you can add a chop to any meal for 6,000 won ("South African super-sizing"). Ours came with "pap," a maize-based porridge similar to grits. The pap was topped with stewed tomatoes and onions, and provided a perfect foil to the richness of the lamb.

The sausage, "Boerewors," came out with the lamb and pap. It was full-flavored, spiced with coriander. Like most of the other items on the menu, they source the ingredients and make the sausage in-house. Between the lamb, tomatoes and Boerewors, the plate was an adventure in flavor and texture.

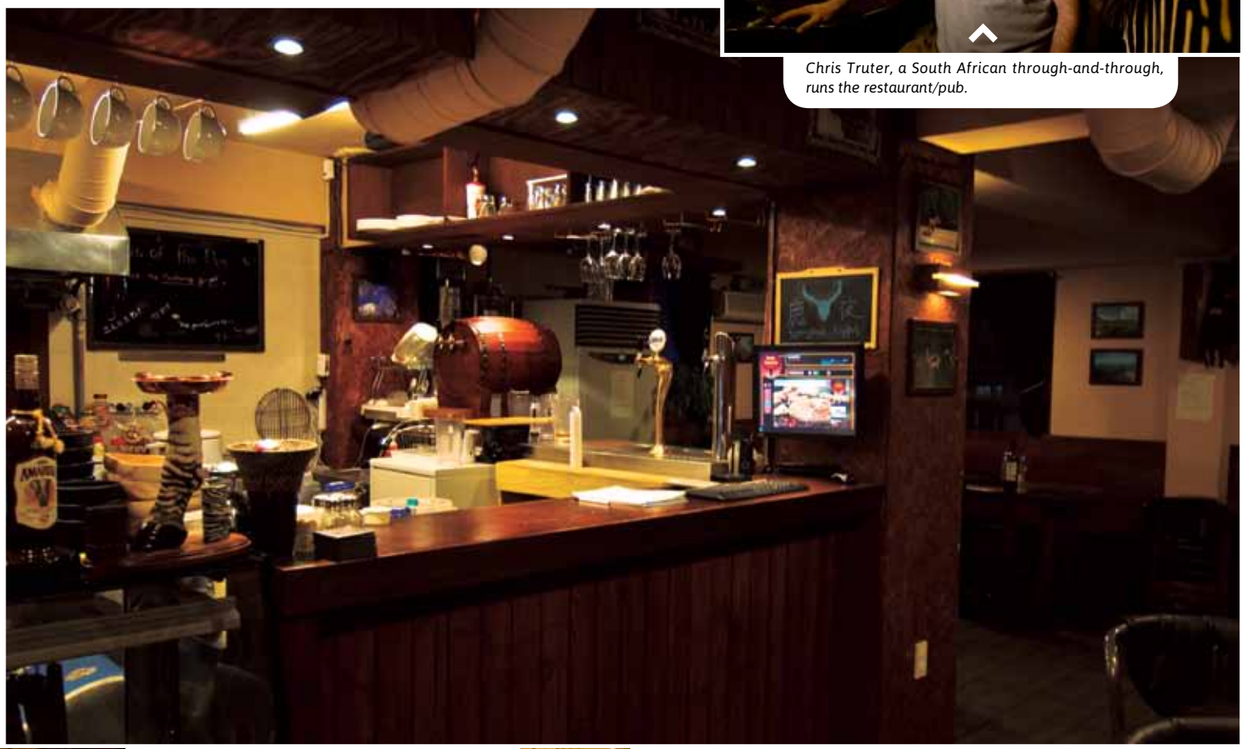
The stew we tried, "potjie," was milder than our other dishes. It came in a cast-iron Dutch oven, with plenty of pap on the side. The stew itself consisted of little pieces of lamb shank on the bone, baby carrots, potato, pumpkin and green beans. Truter instructed us on how to eat the stew: spoon most of it out onto the pap, but save some pap for the end – it's good for sopping up that last bit of juice.

Truter, a strapping, bald man who looks like he could survive hard times in the bush, takes obvious relish in watching his customers eat South African food. He jumps at opportunities to further their understanding of South African culture. I asked him about a photo of a black-and-white animal hanging on the wall.

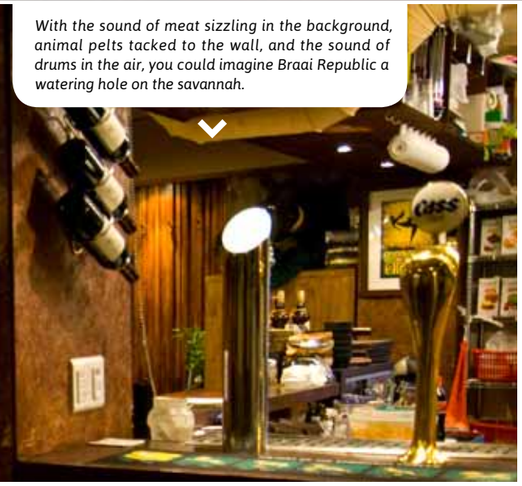
***Like most of***
*the other items on the menu, they source the ingredients and make the sausage in-house. Between the lamb, tomatoes and Boerewors, the plate was an adventure in flavor and texture.*



*Chris Truter, a South African through-and-through, runs the restaurant/pub.*







*With the sound of meat sizzling in the background, animal pelts tacked to the wall, and the sound of drums in the air, you could imagine Braai Republic a watering hole on the savannah.*

"Is that a honey badger?"

Yes, he said. "The world just discovered honey badgers. We grew up loving honey badgers."

Later he put "Snake Killers of the Kalahari" on the big screen in the corner of the restaurant. It's a documentary about honey badgers. We watched as the creatures encountered one danger after another. It did enhance the experience.

Braai Republic has meat pies, pork sausages, and other dishes, along with homemade cheesecake that is moist, rich, and insanely good. They also serve South African drinks – Hunter's cider and Pinotage wine. Perhaps their most unique drink is the "springbok" – a shot of crème de menthe topped with Amarula, a liqueur made from the Marula fruit.

Braai Republic is a casual restaurant most of the time, but gets pretty rowdy on Saturday nights. That's when all the South Africans living outside Seoul are in town, Truter said. "It gets pretty crazy."



# Big changes at Big Rock

**Story by** George Kim / **Photos by** Matthew Lamers

Big Rock Brewery hardly needs an introduction. For the past five years it has been one of the best places to get a beer in Seoul. It was a trail blazer for craft breweries in Korea, being one of the first to offer premium craft brews.

Big Rock Brewery has always been known as a pub with really, really good beer.

For Andy Lee, owner and CEO, that's a problem.

The food had always been standard fare, consisting of burgers, wings, etc. Pretty unspectacular stuff for a place with some of the best beer in the country.

"People knew about the quality of the beer, but were less concerned with the food," said Lee. "We want to become more known for our food, too."

It's a bold transition to go from one of Seoul's most popular pubs to a restaurant. Behind the move is Lee's desire to become a landmark for Western food in Gangnam.

***"I want this place** to be more than fun. When customers walk into my restaurant, they can be fully taken in by the atmosphere, the drink and the food. It's the whole experience. It will be entertaining from not only a perspective of drink and atmosphere, but they will enjoy the food too."*

*— Andy Lee, owner and CEO*











### *Makhloufi Faycel bio*

- Born in Tunisia
- Been in Korea 20 months
- Married with a son on the way
- Personal favorite: "of course, couscous"
- Specialty: Classic lasagna, couscous
- Studied cuisine in Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Napoli, and Tunisia
- Studied Korean language in Daegu for one year
- Moved to Korea because he was interested in Korean culture





"Every time we change the menu it is a challenge, but I hope after this we are not a bar, but we are recognized as a restaurant. I want this to be a landmark for Western food in Gangnam," the CEO said.

Another new feature this month is that Big Rock Brewery will open up for Gangnam's lunch crush. It's expected to feature a salad lunch buffet and a good selection of desserts.

They have also overhauled their famous Sunday brunch. "The previous brunch was simple, but the new one is French-inspired and we're adding different special salads every week, sweet couscous salad, we're making some crepes, etc.," said Lee.

Groove Korea sat down with executive chef Makhloufi Faycel for an exclusive sampling of his new menu, which is expected to be available in May. Faycel, from Tunisia, has trained all around the world. He studied in Napoli in 2005, Saudi Arabia from 2008 to 2010, Dubai in 2009 and his native Tunisia from 2001 to 2006. He has been in Korea nearly two years.

He said the new brunch will be infused with a touch of class: "Every week there is something new – crockenbouche, different mousse cake, cookies, sponge cake, and éclair chocolate."

He said the dinnertime menu will be international, with a special focus on Mediterranean. "I want to make something special in Big Rock that you can't find anywhere else. We want to make something new, fresh, and original," said Faycel.

The young chef said he does not use artificial coloring or chemicals. "I want all my ingredients to be natural. I want my customers – even vegetarians – to find something they love here. Take couscous as an example. A lot of people – Canadian, Europeans, Arabs – want couscous, but it's really hard to find in Korea."

Faycel echoed Lee's desire to make Big Rock more upscale. "Other restaurants just give chicken or normal pub food, but we want to add something special; we'll pay more attention to the food, rather than just give it a passing thought."

Despite the changes, Lee doesn't foresee a tough transition. "I want this place to be more than fun. When customers walk into my restaurant, they can be fully taken in by the atmosphere, the drink and the food. It's the whole experience. It will be entertaining from not only a perspective of drink and atmosphere, but they will enjoy the food, too."

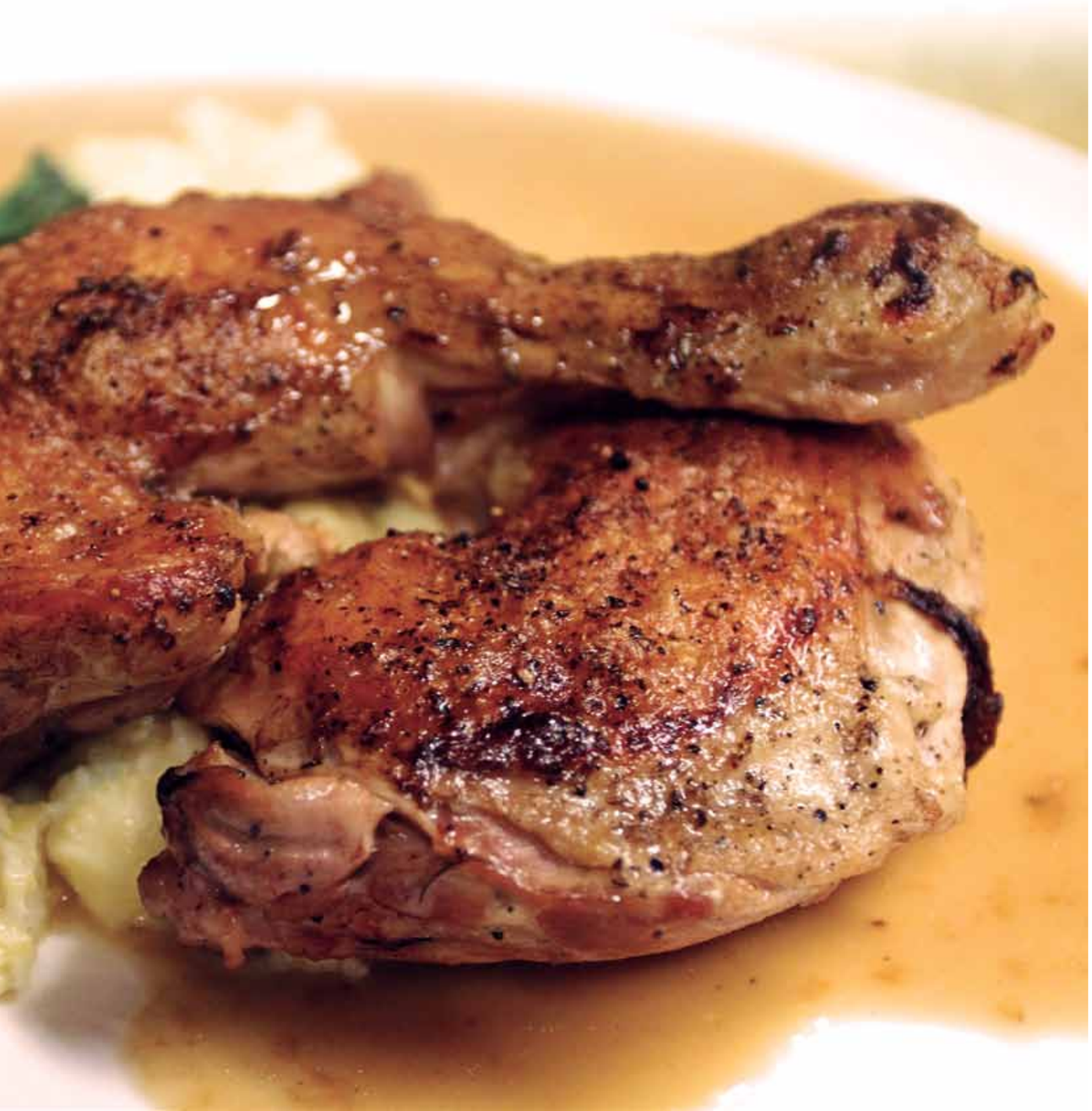
**Directions:** Gangnam Station, exit No. 11; walk straight until you see a small alley on your left; you'll see a GS 25 directly in front of you; turn left into the alley and walk straight for a few minutes; you will pass two alleys; at the third alley, turn left and keep walking; Big Rock Brewery is a 1-minute walk from here on your right.

***Phone: (02) 539-6650***
***Web: http://bigrockbeer.co.kr***

Groove
Recipe

# Alternate win conditions for Operation Bikini

**Story by** Paloma Julian / **Photo by** Cappi Thompson





"Operation Bikini" begins every year in Spain about this time. It's a dark ritual that involves doing whatever is necessary to achieve the perfect summer body. If we're being honest with ourselves, we'll probably never get that body. But we try anyway. Oh, do we try.

It's the second major self-improvement effort of every year, after New Year's resolutions. Back in late December we were going to join a gym, diet, by next summer become goddesses. Now here we are, a third of the year over and no progress to report. Time for a redoubling of efforts. Desperate measures. Operation Bikini.

Every year, the fad diets come with much fanfare and then quietly go away. There's the artichoke diet, the Duncan diet, the fruit diet, and currently and most bizarre of them all, the food inhaler diet. Yes, you read it correctly. The Vaportrim ("Inhale flavours. Curb cravings. Lose weight.") consists of a tube, similar in size to a cigarette, that is used to inhale the flavours and smells of a muffin, a cupcake, or a cinnamon bun. Seriously. By smelling these tubes you're supposed to avoid the actual temptation of eating those chocolate doughnuts. Since when does smelling tasty food make you less hungry? Some people might be able to dupe their appetites with this trick (olé for them), but when my stomach rumbles, no man or machine can stop it.

When I'm hungry I want to enjoy eating. Actual eating. Operation Bikini this year is about self-acceptance. Today I went to the market to buy a chicken and beers. As I crack my beer (only one – the rest are for the recipe), I accept that I will not lose those 10 kilograms. And I feel better. I start cooking, and love myself a little bit more.

> *"When I'm hungry I want to enjoy eating. Actual eating. Operation Bikini this year is about self-acceptance."*

***DRUNK CHICKEN***
*Ingredients:*

- One chicken cut into small pieces
- Half a liter of lager beer
- Mushrooms (optional)
- One onion, diced
- One clove of garlic
- One bay leaf
- Olive oil
- Pepper, salt

***PREPARATION***

Marinate the chicken in beer for one night. Heat olive oil on medium-low heat until the oil begins to ripple. Fry the onion in the oil until it turns translucent. Add the garlic, making sure it doesn't burn. When the onions are almost done, season the chicken and put it into the same pan. Fry the chicken until the skin is brown and crisp. At that point, cover the chicken with the beer you used for the marinade. Add more if need be. Let it cook for around 35 minutes on low heat. Add the mushrooms and the bay leaf, and let it cook for 10 more minutes. Add more salt if needed.

Tip for serving: if you want to have a very creamy sauce, take the chicken and the mushrooms out of the pan and blend the rest of the sauce. Serve with French fries, boiled rice or mashed potatoes.

**About the author:** Paloma Julian is Spanish to the core, although she hasn't lived there in years. A woman of many talents, she enjoys bringing the nuances of Spanish food culture to Seoul's English-speaking community.



Groove
Recipe

# Now we're cooking with oil

**Story by** Read Urban / **Photo by** Elizabeth Papile

FOOD & DRINK
Urbs & Spices

Last month I outlined a recipe for making a foolproof risotto. If you tried your hand at the techniques and realized how easy it is, I think it is time to take your skills to the next level. This month we are going to fry that risotto. Deep-frying food scares off many new home cooks. Maybe it is the mess it creates, or the fear of 350-degree oil splashing everywhere. I will tell you now that with a bit of planning and attention to safety, you can avoid both and create a safe, clean cooking environment.

Deep-frying necessitates a frying vessel with a sturdy base (preferably heavy-bottomed; nothing thin and flimsy). It also helps if the pot does not have a long handle or anything that could tip it over. I use a large wok at home, but I turn the handle away from the front of the stove, so that there's no danger of knocking it over.

Remember that oil expands when it heats up, so use less than you think you need. Depending on the size of your pot, anywhere from one to two quarts will be acceptable. I fill my wok a third of the way full with cold oil and let it heat up slowly.

The most important step in deep-frying is maintaining the temperature of the oil. I tend to use soybean oil for two reasons: 1. It has a relatively high smoke point and 2. It is cheap and abundant in Korea. Avoid olive oil (although some people swear by it) and any other oil with a low smoke point. It is crucial that you use a thermometer to maintain a consistent temperature while frying. The following recipe calls for 350-degree Fahrenheit oil, so I will usually heat my oil 10 degrees more to make up for the heat loss when adding the risotto. You will always have heat loss when adding ingredients to hot oil; the goal though is not to let the oil temperature drop too low, making the food greasy and soggy. After all, we want crunchy, crisp, and golden brown.

When placing food into hot oil, lay it in slowly and away from you. This will lessen the chances of oil splashing in your direction. Use a slotted metal spoon or wire skimmer (sometimes called a spider) to flip and remove your food. Don't think you have to toss all of that perfectly good oil you just used. After you are finished cooking, let the oil cool to room temperature. Remove any large bits of debris and pass it through cheesecloth or a coffee filter. Store it in the fridge and use it next week for another fry session. Once you have conquered your fear of frying, the options are endless. You can tackle anything from calamari to doughnuts now. Go forth with your knowledge of all things golden brown. Brandish your slotted spoon and join the ranks of the fearless home cooks.

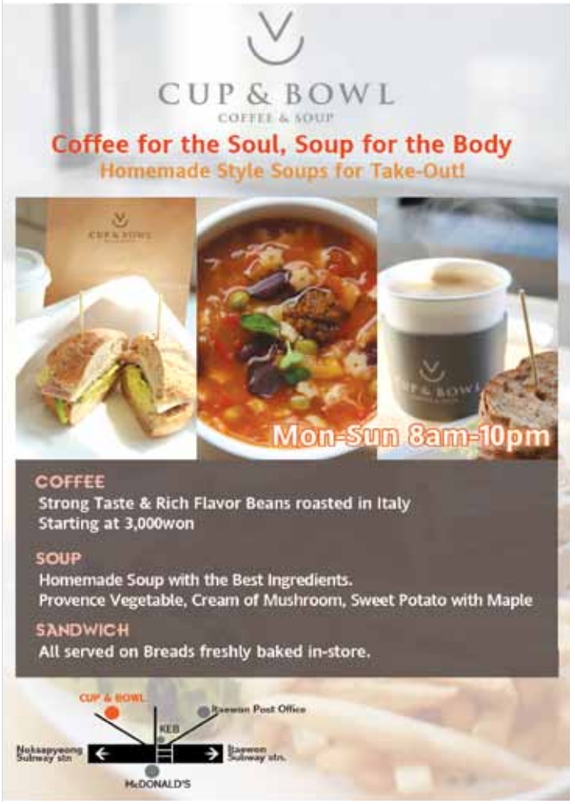
***RISOTTO CAKES***
*Ingredients:*

- Leftover, refrigerated risotto
- Flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- Panko breadcrumbs
- Oil for frying
- Salt and pepper

In a large, sturdy pot, heat the oil slowly to 350 degrees. While the oil is heating, set up your breading station by placing the flour and bread crumbs on separate plates along with the beaten eggs in another shallow dish. Season the flour with salt and pepper and mix to combine. The breading station should start with the flour followed by the beaten eggs and end with the breadcrumbs. When the oil is up to temperature, take a ball of the risotto (a bit smaller than the size of your palm) and form it into a patty about one-and-a-quarter-inch thick. Place the patty in the seasoned flour to coat. Transfer to the egg, making sure that everything is covered, even the sides. Finally, cover the risotto patty with the breadcrumbs. Carefully place the risotto in the hot oil, dropping it away from you. Fry for two-and-a-half to three minutes, or until it is golden brown. Make sure not to crowd the pot with too many patties (fry in batches of one or two). Carefully remove from the oil and let drain. Serve hot with a light salad and lemon wedge.

**About the author:** Read Urban, a Virginia native, spent years cooking in the United States before coming to Korea. He enjoys experimenting with Korean ingredients, eating at innovative restaurants in Seoul and creating favourites from home.



# L.A. tacos, with a side of Seoul

**Story by** Elaine Knight / **Photos by** Ryan Noel






***"These dishes** although of Korean inspiration, are executed in classic Mexicali style. They hold to their Latin souls without wavering."*



L.A. has become a taco mecca. Enthusiasts dedicate websites to rating taco stands and mapping taco trucks in the city. Taco-related laws have become hot topics in local politics. Taqueria favorites like El Taurino, King Taco and El Chato have become legendary. People are always trying to figure out where the best taco place in the city is. There are too many good choices in L.A. to narrow it down to one. But in Seoul, that's easy – Vatos.

A far cry from your piñata-filled Tex-Mex burrito joint, Vatos Urban Tacos delivers authentic L.A. tacos. The flavors of the diverse city are reflected on the menu, a mosaic of classic tacos and quesadillas with a touch of Korean flair.

Their bar offering includes a selection of margaritas and makkeolitas. You'll have to visit yourself to see how Corona is served Vatos-style.

The Taquero (taco chef), Kenny Park, stays true to his Angelenos roots. When asked why he started an "urban tacos" restaurant in Seoul, Park replied, "I was really interested in bringing the L.A. taco experience using quality and fresh ingredients. It's the one thing I miss most in Korea and it is also the one thing my friends here miss most."

But Kenny didn't just recreate the L.A. taco.

He wove the energy and creativity of the L.A. taco scene and the unique flavors of Korean cuisine to create a new tapestry of taste.

So exactly what kinds of dishes make up this food fusion? Start by taking the best-selling item at Vatos, the kimchi carnitas fries. Originally skeptical of such a concoction, I found the resulting flavor profile delicious.

This meaty appetizer (really more of a meal) gets its name from the distinct solo notes of the sour kimchi matched with the savory pork carnitas. With a dollop of cool and slightly sweet sour cream and some fixins', the fries bring all the flavors into a harmonious balance. It is definitely worth a try.

They hold to their Latin souls without wavering. Did I mention that some of the best tacos aren't even on the menu? Don't worry, the shrimp and fish tacos are now a standard and will not being going away.

So what dishes make the list as the taquero's top five? Our top-secret intelligence unit revealed these findings: 5. Galbi Taco; 4. Steak-Carne Asada Taco; 3. Fish Taco; 2. Carnitas Taco; and, in the top spot, 1. The Shrimp Taco.

Now you know, so when the hunger for something savory hits you, think tacos, or better yet, think Vatos Urban Tacos, L.A. style with a serving of Seoul.

Galbi short rib and Korean-style pork belly tacos also grace the menu. I was expecting little more than galbi in a tortilla but could not have been more wrong. These dishes, although of Korean inspiration, are executed in classic Mexicali style.

***Location:** "Lower" Itaewon. Walk down the street from Wolfhound, toward Noksapyeong Station. It's behind (down the stairs from) Dillinger's.*
*Vatos is open for lunch and dinner (closed 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. for prep) with a set menu and rotating specials changing monthly.*

***Address:** Itaewon-dong 66-8 2F, Seoul, South Korea 140-200*
***Phone:** 02-797-8226*
***Website:** http://www.vatoskorea.com*
***Owners:** Kenny Park, Juweon Kim and Sid Kim*



# SUWON SUNDAYS

**Story by** Tighe Burke / **Photos by** Matthew Lamers

DESTINATIONS
Korea: Suwon

*Just a short train or bus ride away from Seoul, a trip to Suwon takes little planning or preparation. Let your nose lead you to the sutbul galbi, the local specialty.*



**SUWON, Gyeonggi Province —**

Trekked up Bukhansan? Check. Walked the Han? Been there, done that, too. If you've already checked off your day trips in Seoul over the past few sunny Sundays, hop down to Suwon, an interesting place packed with rich historical sites just an hour train ride from Seoul.

Hwaseong Fortress, the rolling, 20-foot-high wall that surrounds central Suwon, is over 200 years old. While it's not as old as some of the more popular historic sites around Korea, hiking along the three-and-a-half-mile perimeter can be a pleasant way to spend a Sunday.

On a recent Sunday, I started at the base, Hwaseong Haengung, just as the sun was setting. I wanted to check out both day and night views of the city, so dusk was the perfect time to go. The trek up the stairs to the top of the hill is quite a hike. Only at the top was I able to really relax and take in the scenery and sunset. Not 40 minutes prior, I had been navigating my way through the streets riddled with Paris Baguettes, banks, kimbap restaurants and coffee shops. Here I was at the top of a massive fortress with a humbling view of Suwon down below.

Not many people were at the top, so I relaxed and quietly enjoyed the scene in solitude. After that I scooted down the stairs to visit the various historical landmarks. During the day, a trolley brings passengers around the wall until 5:30 p.m. But at this hour, my only option was to hoof it.



*Hwaseong Fortress, the rolling, 20 foot-high wall that surrounds central Suwon, is over 200 years old. While it's not as old as some of the more popular historic sites, hiking along the three-and-a-half-mile perimeter can be a pleasant way to spend a Sunday.*

Most of the landmarks have English inscriptions, including the archery pit that is, not surprisingly, only open to the public during daylight hours.

I meandered next to the wall for 90 minutes, encountering a few characters along the way. Elderly couple ss exercised in near pitch black darkness at more than one spot. I also happened to see one man hunched over on a bench, quite possibly deceased.

All this walking made me hungry and thirsty, and I was in the mood for some of Suwon's famous "sutbul" galbi with, of course, a little soju to wash it down.

Sutbul galbi was first created in Suwon, and although it has made its way around the Korean peninsula over the years, there are some nationally famous restaurants which prepare it the way it's always been done: roasted over charcoal.

I descended the wall via the Jidong Market, a maze of little alleys and roads filled with fresh meat and foods from around the country. I passed butchered pigs' heads on display in a shop front and tons of market food, but no real restaurants serving Suwon's famous galbi.

I stumbled across a sex shop that was as big as the average Korean bathroom. I decided to check it out for fun, and the sweet little lady inside gave me great directions to Hwaseong Sutbul Galbi, just around the corner from her shop.

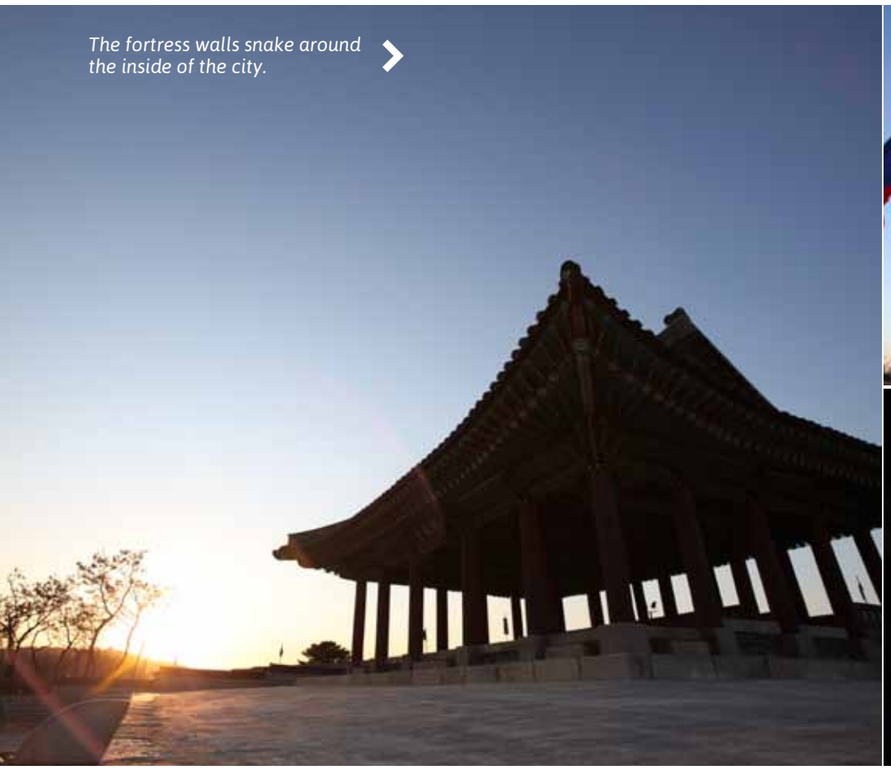
It was immediately clear that the multiple-level restaurant was the kind I was looking for. The place was huge, the waitresses wore matching outfits, and the room was filled with that friendly, culturally rich Korean atmosphere.

The food was delicious, as expected. It's served with tons of side dishes and the kimchi was the freshest I have ever eaten. And although you have to sit on the floor, it is a big enough restaurant that you can sprawl out and shift as much as you want without ever having your butt or feet or legs falling asleep.

After stuffing my face with pork, the waitress brought some "suh-bis-uh" (Konglish for complimentary service) noodles at the end of the meal. I treated myself to some more soju (I felt I had deserved it, after all), paid the bill and left feeling very pleased.



*The fortress walls snake around the inside of the city.*







TRICARE Preferred Dentist

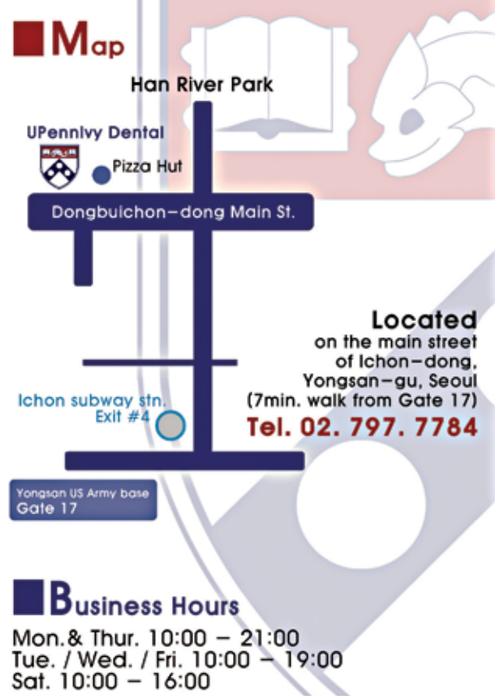
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Dr. SEUNG WOO KIM, DMD



U.S. Board Certified Dentist
Univ. of Pennsylvania Dental School Grad.

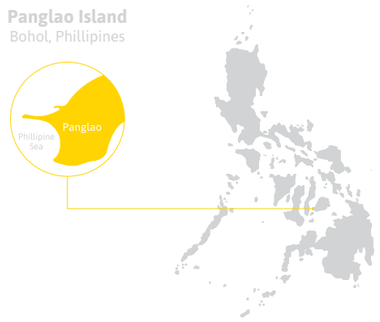
Map




Business Hours
Mon.& Thur. 10:00 – 21:00
Tue. / Wed. / Fri. 10:00 – 19:00
Sat. 10:00 – 16:00

# Tokas in Panglao

**Story by** Josh Foreman / **Photos by** Gavin Hinton




**PANGLAO, the Philippines —**

Talisayon and Red Hots wouldn't look at each other until they were pushed together. Then they wouldn't look away. Their eyes were locked on – one of them had to die. And one would a few short minutes later. That's the game.

Before they fought, though, they had to get angry, even angrier than two cocks put together normally are. A man held Red Hots' head back, and Talisayon took a few savage jabs at his bright wattle. Then Talisayon was held and Red Hots pecked at him. After that, both birds were red hot, ready to go.

Red Hots was the picture of a rooster – orange neck, hanging red wattle, glossy green-black tail that fanned out like palm fronds. Talisayon was ugly. White neck and rump, not shiny and strong-looking like Red Hots. He was a centimetre shorter, too.

Each of them had a three-inch razor tied to his foot. One good kick would send the other to the pot. A good kick would send a person to the hospital, and that was a distinct possibility here. The arena was just a dirt circle in the back of a podunk village on Panglao, a tiny island in the central Philippines. Normally the cocks would be walled off and spectators would be a safe distance away in the stands, but this was a "tokas," an illegal cockfight. No stands here – get as close as you want. Just get ready to jump back if the fight gets too near. The owners took a few steps back and slowly lowered their birds to the dirt of the arena. Their neck feathers stood up like some wicked dinosaur's, and they began edging toward each other. When they got close enough, they became a blur and a little cloud of feathers hung around their heads. Red Hots lunged at Talisayon.

*"Just about every house in the Philippines has at least one fighting cock in its yard. People keep more than one, and tether them with a length of rope so they can't get at one another."*

Talisayon jumped over him and cleared him. I guess after that Talisayon put his knife into Red Hots's belly, because a thin trickle of blood poured out of him and a couple of seconds later he was lying dead on the dirt. The whole fight took ten seconds or so.

**REYNELL LIMBAGA**

I met Reynell Limbaga the night before the fight. He's the one who told me and my three friends about it. Before that conversation, though, he was serenading our table. Alona Beach has a great reef and lots of hotels and restaurants. If you sit down in one of the plastic chairs on the beach, someone will try and serenade you sooner or later. Or give you a massage.

We were sitting out on the beach drinking rum and Reynell came walking up with a guitar. He was a young guy with a wispy goatee and a big smile. He didn't look like some of the other buskers on the beach, who were... rougher. He played Creedence Clearwater Revival, and we gave him a couple of dollars. I told him to keep practicing, and before long we were talking about cockfighting. Turns out he was busking that night to earn money to bet at the fights the next day.

He invited us to go out and see them. We said we'd love to, and he gave us his phone number and told us to meet him at the basketball courts in a village five kilometers away the next morning. We said we would. We have to go to that cockfight, have a real cultural experience, I told my friends after he left. We can't just say tonight that we'll go and then change our minds in the morning because it sounds sketchy and we're hung over. Everyone agreed and we went off to bed.





*By the time the fight arrives, the cocks are angry and ready to go at each other.*

*A three-inch knife is attached to the foot of each cock.*







The next morning we got up and ate breakfast at a little place up the street from the beach. We were a little uneasy about heading out into the Filipino countryside. Panglao isn't that far from Mindanao, where foreigners get kidnapped and executed. And we were, after all, going out to see an illegal cockfight. But Reynell had told us that unless we were holding a cock or a knife when the police showed up, we wouldn't get in trouble, and I thought probably no one would want to hurt us. So we decided to head out.

I sent him a text to ask if the cockfight was still on. He said yes, so we hailed a taxi. Taxis in the Philippines are mostly just low-horsepower motorcycles with elaborate sidecars bolted on. Ours was bright yellow and named the Clemeña Line.

We started off down a narrow but well-kept road, heading toward Lagitan, Reynell's village. Just about every house in the Philippines has at least one fighting cock in its yard. People keep more than one, and tether them with a length of rope so they can't get at one another. The roosters can stand in two spots: on the ground or on a little roost that's usually put up beside them.

In the Clemeña Line we drove by a yard with three dozen or so roosters. Each was about six feet from the other and had a little wooden house in the shape of a pup tent. Must be a farm, I thought.

Cockfighting isn't illegal in the Philippines, but it's regulated. On Panglao, cockfights can only legally be held at the arena on Sundays. Fights on any other day are illegal and subject to police raids. We moved down the narrow road, past stretches of coconut palm, frangipani and hibiscus. After five kilometers we got to the town of Lagitan – a little collection of thatch and cinder-block buildings with a couple of general stores, a waterlogged basketball court and a historic church. Reynell was nowhere in sight, so we hung around the basketball court, four white guys with camera bags.

A man with slicked-back hair and black bubble sunglasses approached us and asked what we were doing there. We kind of ignored him, and I said to the others he looked like he was up to no good and that we should steer clear of him. Later I found out his name was Albert, and he enjoyed watching cockfights, and he drives a motorcycle taxi, and that's why he approached us. He didn't seem so bad after I talked to him; those bubble sunglasses just made him look like a fly.

After a few minutes Reynell showed up and led us to the arena. We set off down a dirt path, past turkeys and huge pink pigs tethered in mud.

As we proceeded, we became immersed in a little crowd heading that way. There were about a hundred men gathered around the dirt arena by the time we got there.

**THE FIGHT**

We were in the middle of a village, but there were no women around. I remember one old woman, but other than her, none. We got there late. One fight had already happened, and another fight wasn't a certainty. The owners of the cocks wouldn't fight them unless there was enough money on the line. Our arrival pretty much guaranteed there would be another fight. Ty and I put money on Red Hots, the favorite – not that much, $20 or so each. Gavin and Chris bet on Talisayon, the less impressive of the two and the underdog. Chris put modest money on the bird, but Gavin for some reason wanted to go big. He put $60 on him, which upset the balance of the bets. The locals scrambled and argued for a while until enough money was raised for Red Hots to make it even. The whole pre-fight betting took an hour or so. There's a lot of build-up to these things.

The thing that struck me most about the fight was how quick it was. It literally took a few seconds before Red Hots was stone dead, laying in the dirt. I had seen an official fight on TV before that, and that fight only took a few seconds, too. If the cocks were not equipped with the wicked foot-razors, the fight might go on for a long time. But with the razors, it was over fast.

Gavin made out like a bandit, doubling his $60. The men who had bet on Red Hots looked disappointed. We felt a little guilty for coming into the village and leaving with more cash than we went in with. One of the organizers asked if we would buy them a couple bottles of rum and some soda. We did. Rum is cheap, so we bought a few bottles. We also bought Red Hots for $5. Everyone said the meat from a fighting cock was the best. We planned to take it back to our guest house and try and persuade one of the local restaurateurs to cook it for us. We rode five kilometers back to town – two of us in a taxi and two on the backs of motorbikes driven by Reynell and a guy from the village. When we got back with Red Hots in hand we felt kind of silly, so we gave him to Reynell. Plus we were scared that we might get caught with an illegally fought cock.

**RELATIVITY**

"Some people put the arm on fighting cocks as cruel. But what the hell else does a fighting cock like to do?" asked Ernest Hemingway.

In 2004, I wrote an exposé on the sad living conditions of chicken-processing-plant workers at a factory in Canton, Mississippi, in the Southern United States. The people who worked in the factory there were mostly Hispanic, and completely in thrall to a cruel and amoral economic machine – the chicken processing plant. They lived in the most desperate conditions – conditions I had not yet seen then but would see in India years later. The local police were extorting money from them; their landlord was extorting money from them; their employer was using them up, a stone's throw from the squalid slums in which they lived. They spent their days gutting and dismembering chickens – repetitive, grisly work, hour after hour, day after day. Fueling the machine was the demand for plump, white meat. Chicken.

The world kills 40 billion chickens annually for food. The vast majority of these chickens are born and raised, and die in the factory farming system. As chicks, the tips of their beaks are melted off. As adults, they live packed with thousands of other birds in dark warehouses. At slaughterhouses, they're hung by their feet – alive and conscious – then electrocuted. A mechanical blade slices their throats; if they aren't dead by that time, a bath of boiling water does them in.

> *"Some people put the arm on fighting cocks as cruel. But what the hell else does a fighting cock like to do?"*

I bring up these unpleasant facts not because I am an animal rights activist, but to highlight the absurd hypocrisy in Western society's outrage at the sport of cock fighting. Cock fighting is illegal in the United States, my home country. In most states there, it's a felony to participate. In most states, it's illegal to even see cockfighting. Meanwhile, in the same country, nearly 10 billion chickens a year are suffering through a short, miserable life before being electrocuted and slashed to death in hidden-away factories.

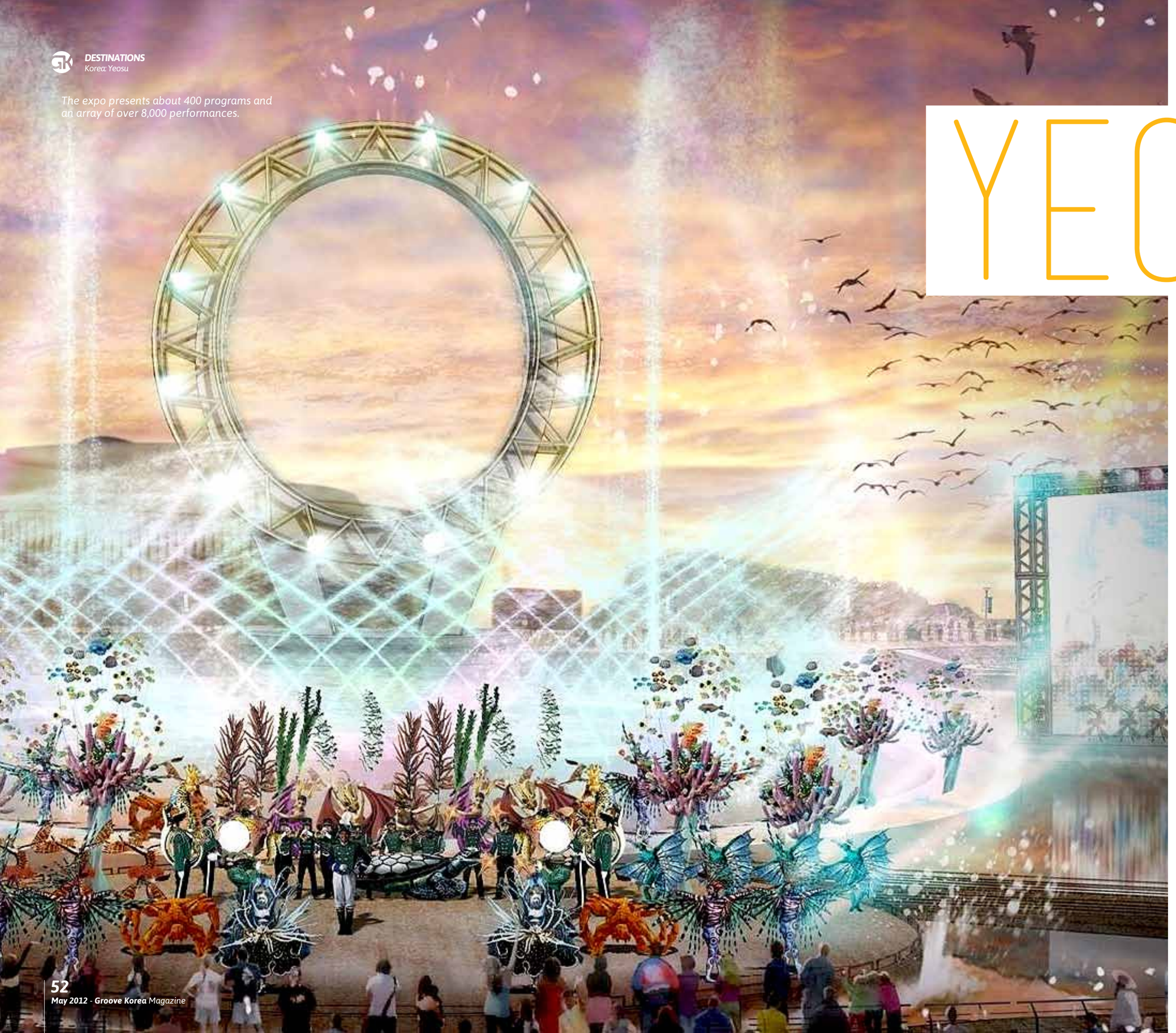
Cockfighting is a bloodsport. It's a deathsport. I'm not saying we should abolish our laws against cockfighting and embrace the sport. But I know what's cruel and what's not, and what goes on in the Philippines is not in the same ballpark as what goes on in those factories, on an exponentially larger scale.

I think back on those cocks I saw on Panglao – strong, proud, with glossy, colorful feathers, space to move around, and life spans of years. Those cocks were chickens the way chickens are meant to exist. They die exalted, in combat with other birds, and then they're eaten by people, the same as those sad, sick chickens in the States.

If I were a chicken, I know which one I'd rather be.







*The expo presents about 400 programs and an array of over 8,000 performances.*





# YEOSU WELCOMES THE WORLD

93-day expo gets underway in picturesque city of Yeosu

**Story by** Matthew Lamers

**YEOSU, South Jeolla Province —** Some 320 kilometres south of Seoul, people from around the world are pouring into this picturesque port city in South Jeolla Province for one of the biggest international events of the year.

Yeosu plays host to the 53rd world exposition May 12 to Aug. 12, marking what is expected to be the biggest international event in what has traditionally been one of the country's most neglected provinces. Following in the footsteps of the massively successful Shanghai Expo in 2010, in which a record 200 countries participated and 73 million people visited, the Yeosu Expo expects a more modest 105 countries and 8 million people to take part.

The theme of the expo is "The Living Ocean and Coast," with subthemes being "Preservation and Sustainable Development of the Ocean and Coast," "New Resources Technology" and "Creative Marine Activities." At the essence of the 93-day exposition is demonstrating how humans can live in better harmony with the ocean. Other goals include promoting the commercialization of renewable energy and sustainable development.

Yeosu rests in the southern part of the province and consists of the Yeosu peninsula as well as 49 inhabited and 268 uninhabited islands. The city of 295,000 was the result of the 1998 merger of Old Yeosu City, Yeocheon City and Yeocheon County.

The characteristics of the expo are seven-fold. Organizers seek to provide a world expo for the ocean; a green expo for low-carbon green growth; a ubiquitous expo for visitors from around the world; a design expo to be an architectural art gallery; a culture expo; an expo of global cooperation and co-prosperity; and an expo where world travel is possible virtually.

"Mankind will rely more and more on the ocean for food and energy in the future," chairman of the organizing committee Kang Dong-suk told the Korea Herald, explaining the expo's emphasis on oceans and sustainable development.

# *Yeosu is in for a busy 93 days. The expo presents about 400 programs and an array of over 8,000 performances.*

"The latest information technology will be applied to the pavilions to show the visitors the vision for the future of the ocean and mankind in innovative ways," added an official with the organizing committee.

It will be the first time in the 161-year history of International Exhibitions Bureau-recognized expos that it is held on the sea. The Yeosu expo takes place on the main harbor in Yeosu.

Taking part are delegations from 105 countries. Of them, 50 will have individual national pavilions, which will undoubtedly be highlights of the expo.

Fifty-six developing countries will participate in joint national pavilions classified into the three areas – the Pacific Pavilion, Atlantic Pavilion and the Indian Ocean Pavilion. Some will run souvenir shops and restaurants that sell items unique to their culture.

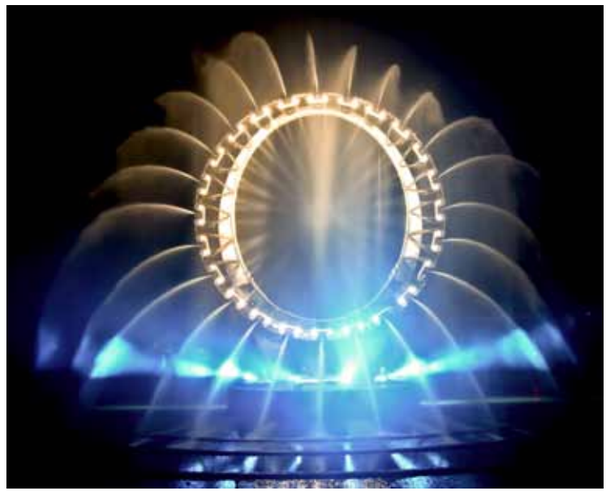
The expo will also be a corporate showcase for Korean companies. Seven of the country's leading corporations pitched in for the aptly named Corporate Pavilion, which will focus on sea-related content. The Korean Ship Owners' Association and port authorities built – you guessed it – the Korea Shipping & Ports Pavilion. One of the busiest pavilions is expected to be the Marine Robot Pavilion, which is sponsored by Daewoo Shipping & Marine Engineering.

Maritime education will be an important part of the Ocean & Coast Best Practice Area, where 13 corporations and research institutes demonstrate "the best" practices related to the ocean.

Yeosu is in for a busy 93 days. The expo presents about 400 programs and an array of over 8,000 performances.

The centerpiece of the expo is the Big-O, where the Night Multimedia Show, the Big Ocean Show and the World Ocean Festival take place every day. K-POP concerts will also be held here.

There is also an academic angle to the expo. International organizations, NGOs and academia will participate in a number of forums to discuss global issues, such as climate change and sustainable marine development. The Yeosu Declaration will be adopted at a forum held on Aug. 12 and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will call on the global community the conserve the oceans.



*The centerpiece of the expo is the Big-O, which is also the biggest sea-based water fountain in the world.*

## Korean pavilion highlights

Visitors are required to make a reservation in advance of visiting Korea's eight pavilions and enter only at a designated time; this is to ensure that no one is stuck in a three-hour line.

In particular, the Aquarium and the DSME Marine Robot Pavilion are expected to be the most popular.

There are too many pavilions for visitors to experience in one or two days, so it would be wise to plan ahead. Organizers estimate it would take about 70 hours to visit all the exhibition facilities.

## Other pavilion highlights

**UAE**
*Theme: "Living Seas"*

The UAE pavilion showcases the country's multifaceted maritime connections with unique displays, interactions and movies. "Ocean of Dreams," "Sea Mail," and "Reflections" create fascinating edutainment while Infopods present sharks, turtles, dugongs, mangroves, corals and fisheries. The show's highlight is "The Turtle," a mini-feature film whose intriguing trailer can be previewed at www.youtube.com/filmsonuae.

**Germany**
*Theme: "Achievements in oceanic and coastal related science and technology"*

Germany's pavilion presents marine-related cutting-edge technologies. It consists of three theme worlds – the Coasts, the Habitat and the Treasure Trove – where visitors will enjoy a number of interactive exhibits. The highlight of the pavilion, though, is expected to be a spectacular show that incorporates an immersive 3-D environment, created with 96 single projectors.

**Spain**
*Theme: "Spain Explores"*

The 1,000-square-meter Spanish pavilion will convey the nation's excellence in oceanographic research and lengthy tradition in geographic exploration, navigation and scientific discoveries from the 15th to the 21st centuries.

**USA**
*Theme: "Diversity, Wonder and Solutions"*

The United States will use exciting technologies and immersive storytelling to bring their 1,236-square meter pavilion to life. It will highlight the diverse and dynamic nature of America's ocean and coastal environments, as well as the colorful mosaic of American life.

The USA Pavilion will include a main attraction of stunning images, music and film projected across a 70-foot-wide screen. Stories will unfold to present the diverse beauty of the American coastline and the personal connections that Americans enjoy with oceans. Multimedia channels will take visitors from the shorelines of America to the frontiers of deep-ocean research and show that with enthusiasm, optimism and cooperation the challenges of the future can be overcome.

**Russia**
*Theme: "Ocean and Person – Path from the Past to the Future"*

In the Russian pavilion, visitors will become familiar with the 500-year history of Russia's exploration efforts of the Northern Sea Route, viewing models of ships that were used on these journeys – from the first Pomorian Kochs to modern nuclear-powered icebreakers. Visitors will also take part in a tour through a library of the future, where instead of physical books, all information will be available in an interactive manner on touch panels.

**France**
*Theme: "Desalination of the Sea Water"*

The French pavilion is divided into four areas that will present "The Wonderful Adventures of Sogeumi Salt Crystal." Each space represents the journey of Sogeumi while seawater is desalinated.








*One of the busiest pavilions is expected to be the Marine Robot Pavilion, which is sponsored by Daewoo Shipping & Marine Engineering.*

## Getting to and from Yeosu

**Seoul-Yeosu by plane**
Korean Air and Asiana Air fly between Yeosu Airport and Seoul's Gimpo Airport eight times per day. The flights take about 48 minutes and typically cost from 65,000 won to 75,000 won each way.

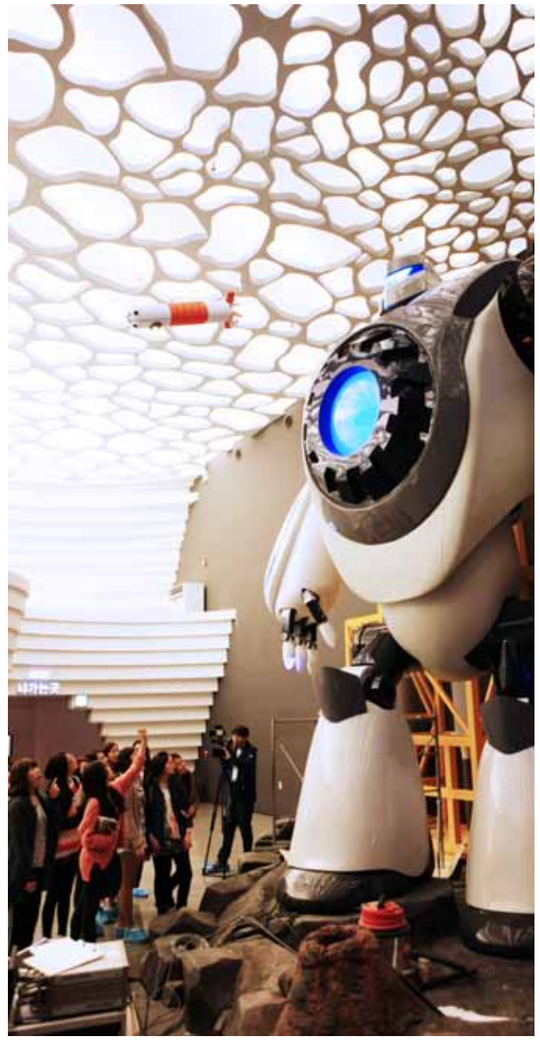
**Seoul-Yeosu by train**
The KTX bullet train connects Yongsan Station in downtown Seoul to Yeosu Expo Station in about 3 hours and costs 42,800 won. Not in a rush? Take the Mugunghwa, the slow train, which costs 26,400 won and takes 5 hours.

**Seoul-Yeosu by bus**
Clocking in at 5.5 hours, this is the cheapest and most time consuming way to traverse the Seoul-Yeosu route. It costs just 19,900 won. Pay 10,000 more and get a deluxe bus.

**Busan-Yeosu by plane**
At the time of writing, there were no flights connecting Busan and Yeosu. This might change, however, when the expo opens and train tickets sell out, so check with Korean Air and Asiana Airlines.

**Busan-Yeosu by train**
You will have to take the train from Daejeon to get to Yeosu as there is no direct Busan-Yeosu KTX route. The KTX will get you between Sao-Daejeon Station and Yeosu in 2 hours and 30 minutes for 24,600 won. For the greatest convenience, take the Mugunghwa, the slow train. Depart Busan Station, transfer at Sao-Daejeon Station, and go on to Yeosu from there. Total time is actually the same as the "bullet" train, at 3 hours, when you take the KTX transfer at Sao-Daejeon Station into account. Cost is 17,400 won.

**Busan-Yeosu by bus**
The Busan-Yeosu route is most commonly served by bus. There are eight buses that connect Busan Sasang Station and Yeosu per day at a cost of 18,100 won. It takes about 2 hours and 50 minutes.



## Important dates

**Opening ceremony: May 11**
*Venue: Floating stage*

**Opening of the expo site: May 12**
*Venue: Main gate*

**National days: May 12 – Aug. 11**
*Venue: EXPO hall*

**Local goverment days: May 13 – Aug. 11**
*Venue: Traditional stage*

**Corporate days: May 12 – Aug. 11**
*Venue: Corporate plaza*

**Korea day: Aug. 1**
*Venue: Expo site*

**BIE day: Aug. 11**
*Venue: Expo site*

**Closing ceremony: Aug. 12**
*Venue: Floating stage*

## 4 don't-miss expo landmarks

**The Big-O**
Located at the center of the Expo site, the Big-O features the largest sea-based fountain in the world on the 40-meter-high structure.

**The Expo Digital Gallery**
Installed on the canopy of the central promenade of the International Pavilion, the Expo Digital Gallery features a 218-meter-long and 30-meter-wide LED screen.

**The Sky Tower**
It was listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the loudest pipe organ in the world last year, putting out an ear-piercing 138.4 decibels. The observation deck atop the roof will offer the best views of the expo grounds. The organ and observation deck were built from abandoned cement silos, which will also house a desalination facility and a multimedia exhibition.

**The Aquarium**
The Aquarium boasts a 6,000-ton water tank, which is equal to the volume the COEX Aquarium in Seoul and the Busan Aquarium combined.

MUSIC
SuperColorSuper

THE TRIALS & TRIBULATIONS OF

# SUPER COLOR SUPER

## ON THE CUSP OF AN INDIE MUSIC REVOLUTION

**Story by** Ethan Thomas / **Photos by** Rayiaz Khan & DukHwa



When Sean Maylone brought over U.S. dance-punk band Liars to Korea he thought he'd made a big score. Well-regarded in independent music circles, the band was sure to generate a lot of hype. They showed up thinking they'd be performing in front of thousands of rabid Korean fans, but when someone made a phone call and reported them without the correct visa to perform, they sat in their hotel room for days, unable to play.

The Korea Media Rating Board, which approves of foreign content – and was responsible for the age restriction on the Lady Gaga show – canceled their tours and told SuperColorSuper if they put it on they were breaking the law.

Since they had already paid for the venue, Maylone cobbled together a last-minute show with a couple of local bands and DJs, but it was a considerable financial blow for Maylone and his small but dedicated team of indie music promoters at SuperColorSuper.

*"If we can wave the cool wand on Korea then the bands won't be scared to play here. And if the bands want to come, there needs to be someone like me to facilitate it."*

"When Liars collapsed there was a huge outpouring of support. Right now we are facing a similar situation, where people have attention on us, since the announcement of the possible close (of SCS)," Maylone said.

Since June of 2009, Maylone, the founder and head organizer of SCS, has been trying to fill a long empty void – international acts for affordable prices – not only in Seoul, but across Korea.

With the help of Violet Her, who handles the Korean end of the operation, and up to 100 volunteers that act as a street team, SCS has put on shows in Seoul, Daegu, Busan, Cheonan, Gwangju and Daejeon.

Maylone, 30, grew up in California, close to Sacramento. In a telephone interview with Groove Korea he spoke about West Coast venues he admired, like Portland, Oregon's Holocene, a small space well known for putting on cutting-edge shows.

Holocene is the kind of venue where people go to concerts without knowing who the band is first, trusting the taste of the venue. "You look at their calendar and there are good bands every night of the week," Maylone said.

That's what Maylone has been trying to build with SCS. They've put on roughly 40 bands with a lot of indie cred, including Xiu Xiu, Dan Deacon and Mogwai, and SCS has been trying to turn people on to new music based on their upcoming show list.

Maylone mentioned the tastemaker website Pitchfork and the way it can make or break a band.

"We're trying to build up that reputation," he said.

In May they're putting on shows by indie stalwarts Blonde Redhead and Asobi Seksu.

International cities like Berlin, New York and Tokyo have a constant influx of bands from around the world.

"We wanted to make Seoul have that kind of scene," Maylone said. He would like to see the city become a lifeline for music goers and a cultural hub.

It's tough, when you're dealing with a lot of unknowns. SCS flew over The King Khan and the BBQ Show only to see them fall apart in front of a crowd in Daegu. "It was really unprofessional," Maylone said. "They had a fist fight on stage and broke up. ... It was stressful and chaotic, whiskey bottles thrown. I got caught in the middle of that and was super uncomfortable."

Maylone's team is small and they share much of the risk for the success or failure of each act.

"I don't want it to be such a gamble," Maylone said. "But when I lose my ability to take risks I'm going to have to stop doing shows.

"I feel bad for the people who work for me. I don't mind wasting my own time, but almost half of the tours we lose money on."








The challenge lies in bringing over international acts to a place that has long been a flyover city for bands playing East Asia. They stop in Japan and play cities in China, but rarely stop in Seoul on their tours.

Aside from what SCS does, the only hope for international music fans are the two festivals in the summer, Pentaport and Jisan Valley Rock Festival, which have shared bands with the Summersonic and Fuji Rock festivals in Japan, and infrequent, overpriced concerts put on by domestic promoters.

In January of 2012, Hyundai Card put on a sold-out show by the Irish folksinger Damien Rice for 165,000 won per ticket, which is a lot of money to see a guy and his guitar.

"I cannot for the life of me understand why they put the show on for that much money," Maylone said. "That one was really cartoon-y."

Maylone estimates domestic promoters are overpricing shows by 45-50 percent: "There's marking it up, and then there's gouging."

New York indie-pop band Pains of Being Pure at Heart played a show put on by a Korean promoter in February for 75,000 won. "I saw the budget," Maylone said. "I know the cost of putting on that band. It should have cost 45,000." He says part of the reason the costs are so high is that the promoters don't do a lot of shows, but they have large offices and staffs.

Typically, smaller, international acts that are popular in Korea achieve that popularity by landing a song on a drama or a film. Then they're asked to come over and play a show with ticket prices at upwards of 90,000 won.

Maylone wants the prices to be closer to what he was used to paying in the United States, but balancing the ticket costs against fan turnout and the myriad of other costs can be a delicate art.

"Everything's on a limited budget. The budget comes from people who buy tickets, so if you don't get enough people, then you have a shortfall," he said.

A lot of the costs come from flights and getting equipment over, which is why we've seen a lot of smaller acts and one-man shows. Once he gets the bands in, it's easier to make up expenses by having the bands play multiple shows around Korea.

It costs about 2 million won to rent out a small club in Hongdae and about 10 million for AX Hall. Bigger bands need a lot of rented gear and often require specific equipment.

"We had to get a grand piano for CocoRosie," Maylone said. "There were like seven guys carrying it in."

If you pay to rent the venue, the promoter gets the door and the bar gets the alcohol sales. The simple answer to make the shows profitable is to get more people to come to the shows.

But it's not as easy as it sounds, especially when you're talking about bringing in musicians that most Koreans have never heard of.

"We've been losing money," Maylone said. "I've barely been able to pay my rent. I've been stressing about it way too much. If we don't start making money we might have to shut down international shows."

SCS put out an announcement in the middle of April, stating: "It's almost certain we won't make concerts with international bands any longer. We will make the tours for No Age, Blonde Redhead and Asobi Seksu as we've announced previously, but none after these. The reason for closing is low support from the public and local companies. There are not a lot of indie fans in South Korea in general. And still most indie/creative organizations, labels or bands do not support our project, which has been progressively advancing the scenes in Seoul and beyond more than any other before."

The letter went on to say: "We've only gotten spiritual compensation out of this, we don't make money, and extra income is committed to bringing more bands over or setting up artistic projects like Super Sketch or G'OLD. Making no money is fine. But with low support for our amazing spring line-up, it looks like we are even going to lose quite a lot of money."

Even if SCS gets the bands over here, there might be other factors working against them. Maylone said they've had some moments of crisis, including two big cancellations.

There's always the problem of getting bands interested in Korea. Though with the increasing popularity of K-pop and Korean films, it's getting easier.

"If Das Racist has been here and then blogged about it, more bands will see it and come over. Obviously we'd love to keep bringing bands in," Maylone said. "I wanted to do Animal Collective, Das Racist (again), Neon Indian, Atlas Sound, The National and a lot more.  If our spring line-up can go well enough."

"If we can wave the cool wand on Korea then the bands won't be scared to play here. And if the bands want to come there needs to be someone like me to facilitate it. If we jump out the only people who will put on shows like this are the 88,000-won-a-show people."

Their shows in May – possibly their last international concerts ever – include Blonde Redhead on May 4 and Asobi Seksu on May 12 and 13.

For ticket information, go to www.supercolorsuper.com.

*"If we don't start making money we might have to shut down international shows."* — *Sean Maylone*





# HBC FEST

## DOESN'T WANT TO ROCK THE BOAT — IT JUST WANTS TO ROCK

**Story by** Conor O'Reilly / **Photos by** Conor O'Reilly & Mike hurt

*The festival now regularly attracts musical acts from cities all over Korea. More and more local businesses are vying to join as venues, and organizer Lance Reegan-Diehl has had to turn musical acts away as he can't accommodate the large number of willing participants.*

MUSIC
HBC Fest




***"We love the spirit***
*and ideals that the festival brings. However, we recognize that this is not welcome by local residents and never will be. We are the ones who have to deal with the post-festival backlash; we are not opposed to other options."*
***– Aaron Allinson***

The HBC Fest has seen it all: rock, punk, hip-hop, folk music, poetry, Shakespearean drama, comedy, even a large balding man painted head to toe in green and smashing watermelons over his head.

The festival now regularly attracts musical acts from cities all over Korea. More and more local businesses are vying to join as venues, and organizer Lance Reegan-Diehl has had to turn musical acts away, as he can't accommodate the large number of willing participants.

Never before has the festival received this much publicity. Not only did this magazine give it a three-page feature last October, but all the other major monthly expat magazines, newspapers and websites also featured the festival. On top of this, the festival's reputation grew as a place for people to get together and listen to good music, all under the banner of a music festival designed with expats in mind.

The previous festival in May, 2011 was a watershed moment. The day started off dull and damp. Most of the people who had turned up stayed inside the bars watching the acts, avoiding the rain on the street outside.

But as the rain let up and darkness fell, the streets became all but impassable to traffic. Before long, 300 police arrived and made efforts to shuttle the traffic through the increasingly large crowd, which was overflowing from the packed bars.

The crowd was huge, stretching from outside the Orange Tree bar and Indigo restaurant, all the way up past the Family Mart and bar The Local. Busloads of police arrived to cordon off the revelers from the street in an attempt to allow traffic to flow smoothly.

For those standing on the sidelines it was clear that this kind of reaction would not go unanswered. Reegan-Diehl admitted that "things did get out of hand."

But the crowds of police and people were only the start of Reegan-Diehl's problems that year.

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"At about 10 p.m. on the Saturday night of the May 2011 festival, I was called many times by people I did not know," Reegan-Diehl said. He was so busy that he shrugged off the missed phone calls.

Later on, he met with someone who told him "they," and he can only assume the person meant the police, were out "to get" the organizer of the festival.

"Well, I didn't answer calls until the following week," Reegan-Diehl explained. "As myself and the bars have always said, 'Hey, we all organize this…'" He hoped that the anonymity of the festival's organizational structure would protect him.

Calling it a festival indicates a central point of organization and management, and this in turn suggests that there are significant financial interests invested. Even though this isn't the case, after seeing the crowds, the authorities were looking for someone with whom to talk.

Reegan-Diehl has explained to me on more than one occasion that the festival has always been an event put on by the bars, and to close the street and bring the music out of the bars would take away from the festival's strongest advocates and most consistent supporters. For Reegan-Diehl, who is also a businessman who runs a small music shop on the street, it makes perfect sense: Why would you change the face of a successful product that has won the support of a loyal and reliable customer base?

The history of the festival is known to many. It first took place in July 2006 with three bars, Orange Tree, the now extinct Ssen Bar and the old New Phillies. Jim Gaynor, a regular figure around the neighborhood, and Reegan-Diehl came together and managed to put the festival into motion with the support of the bars.

The first two or three festivals were shaky to say the least. Craig Branch, a drummer who has played in practically every festival save for the first one, recalled his first gig in Ssen. "We were scheduled to play first at Ssen, and we played to a girlfriend of one of the band members, two totally disinterested bar staff, and a Russian girl propping up the bar," he explained. "It was memorable for being, well, bloody cold, damp, dark and a bit shady."

Despite its slow start, the festival has enlivened the expat music scene and presented new opportunities. "I think it's brought the live music scene to a whole lot of people who may not have known any of the performers. I think it's livened up the scene quite a bit. Perhaps it's even inspired people to put together a band, or just to jump up on a stage somewhere and do a solo act," explained Steve Koons of the Kimchee Cowboys, another HBC Fest veteran.

Over the years, the organizers have steadied the ship and learned from their mistakes. But the one issue that has never fully been resolved is how to deal with the growing crowd.

Since it's independently funded, resources are limited, and the way the festival is designed limits the development of what many people have been calling for over the years – to close off the street and host a full-on festival. To do that would require several million won to pay for the license alone, and there are also legal issues regarding the individual visa status of each performer. These are the kind of headaches that even large music festivals would prefer to avoid. While labeled as a festival that draws crowds, its lack of central organization and the independence of each venue are what make it different.

Each bar rents musical equipment from Deeleebob, Reegan-Diehl's music company, then pays a small fee to cover advertising, promotion and support on the day. In exchange, the contributing venues draw the crowds of people that the festival is now known for. For some of the bars, it's their biggest night of the year. It's a simple arrangement with a proven track record.

***"I certainly hope** that we can continue with the fest, but in a way that makes it sustainable. Anything that we can do as friends and fellow business owners, we certainly will do."*





*Kenji will be in from Japan to perform with Reegan-Diehl.*



When news of the October 2011 festival was made public, Reegan-Diehl and management from VFW, Phillies and Orange Tree all met with the police to discuss the plans, so as not to have a repeat of the previous festival's problems. The schedule was shared and everything seemed above board.

That was until Reegan-Diehl started getting anonymous calls threatening his livelihood and status in Korea. Reegan-Diehl told me that he and the VFW manager called back this anonymous caller one night only to be answered by a groggy and drunk voice which soon hung up.

Throughout these altercations the authorities were apparently looking for a money trail which didn't exist. The authorities, according to Reegan-Diehl, found it difficult to understand that all the money went to the bars, and not to him. On top of that, the police said that while they had no problems with the situation, they could do little about other government agencies becoming involved and finding fault with the festival.

Due to this pressure from the authorities, the festival was forced to change its arrangements.

When I asked Reegan-Diehl who was responsible for pressuring him, the musician simply stated "pointing fingers won't help."

Aaron Allinson, a partner in New Phillies, explained in an e-mail, "a lot of Korean authorities were going through the neighborhood, asking questions to business owners. A lot of mistrust and paranoia preceded the fest. A few of their concerns were valid, they just wanted to know what was going on."

These threats continued in the days and weeks running through September, until Reegan-Diehl made a decision backed by the bar owners. If it was the HBC Fest these people were after, then the HBC Fest would be canceled. Instead, a different festival was soon advertised, although with less vigor. It wasn't the HBC Fest anymore, it was the Happy Music Fest.

Reegan-Diehl took down the schedule and canceled all publicity. The word went out through e-mails and Facebook that the festival as it was known would not be going on. Individual acts were requested to contact the bars they were scheduled to perform in.

Reegan-Diehl made plans for himself on the night, too. He would be busy with his own gig in Rocky Mountain Tavern in Itaewon.

The authorities were still prepared and were no doubt watching. Allinson explained that in the run up to the festival, his bar, New Phillies, was asked to close early – at midnight. "Being new to the business arena and perhaps a bit scared of the repercussions, we agreed," he said, before adding that in the end "it was not a terrible decision."



I walked into the neighborhood a little wary of what I might find that night in October, and couldn't believe the contrast. The main street was completely passable. There were a few people outside Phillies and The Local, but the regular busy traffic was smoothly passing through. It was a great relief though when I stepped into the Orange Tree to find the bar full of people. Mike Ganje, the owner, told me that next May they'd do what it took to have the festival back properly. Up and down the street, the bars were manageably busy and the streets clear for traffic to pass. Not a police officer in sight.

So what now for the HBC Fest? While the organizers are determined not to see the festival defeated, it is in need of some changes. Allinson, who has an obvious active and financial interest in the festival, but who also requires positive long-term relationships with his neighbors if his business is to continue successfully, went into detail about the future direction of the festival.

"We love the spirit and ideals that the festival brings," he said. "However, we recognize that this is not welcome by local residents and never will be. We are the ones who have to deal with the post-festival backlash; we are not opposed to other options." The organizers of the festival are all keen to insure the long-term survival of the festival, and options are being considered. "I really like what has been done with the HBC Winter Fest, spreading it out over six weeks," he elaborated, referring to the HBC Winter Fest initiative where acoustic musicians who usually get swamped at the festival were given the opportunity to play in the festival venues in a six-week period stretching from March to mid-April.

Still, the New Phillies partner is not throwing in the towel; he would not cancel the event, he explained, just because a handful of locals don't like people having fun on the street.

While the HBC Winter Fest was an attempt to establish Haebangchon as a regular music venue, the festival itself is still a concern.

In an attempt to curb the number of people arriving and staying all day, the festival scheduling has also been altered with fewer venues playing all day and more music in the bigger band venues on Friday night. The stagnated approach aims to spread out the crowds over a number of festival days.

The local neighborhood clearly can't handle the large numbers of people who attended last summer.



*The Bellows play in the Orange Tree.*





**"Fortunately** *all those with an interest in the festival are keen to keep it alive and are pitching in to keep control of their own part of the crowd."*





Reegan-Diehl is hoping to do more than that, though. He knows that as soon as the posters promoting the festival go up, so will people's eyebrows. With the winter festival, the posters have been up all season, so Reegan-Diehl hopes that familiarization with the festival will make it easier to accept. People will realize that this festival is not a threat to the neighborhood, but a benefit. "I want to promote the neighborhood as one that is friendly to musicians and art," Reegan-Diehl explained to me last October outside his shop at the top of the main Haebangchon drag.

Fortunately, all those with an interest in the festival are keen to keep it alive. During the upcoming event, venues will actively seek to maintain control of their own crowds, and that includes the iconic Koba-Woo supermarket across the street from the Orange Tree, and other local stores such as the Family Mart and Pinoy Mart further up the street, all of which contribute to the street culture of the HBC Fest.

"The venues have soundproofed, they keep their doors shut, they let people know about their events, and they keep their own side of the street tidy and clear of people," Reegan-Diehl emphasized. "It is up to every owner in Haebangchon to remove the loiterers." These actions are necessary to maintain the vitality of the festival.

The venues want this, too, and hopefully people will see that these places can have music all the time and provide the venues that most musicians starting out need. As Allinson explained, "I certainly hope that we can continue with the fest, but in a way that makes it sustainable. Anything that we can do as friends and fellow business owners, we certainly will do."

*The HBC Fest will take place over Friday, May 25, and Saturday, May 26. Confirmed venues so far include New Phillies, VFW, The Local, Orange Tree and the newly added Camarata Music Co. On the day, expect the most eclectic blend of independent music you are likely to find in Korea. For further details, including an up-to-date performance schedule, visit the festival's website,* ***www.hbcfest.com.***

### HBC FEST VENUE INFORMATION

*May 25*

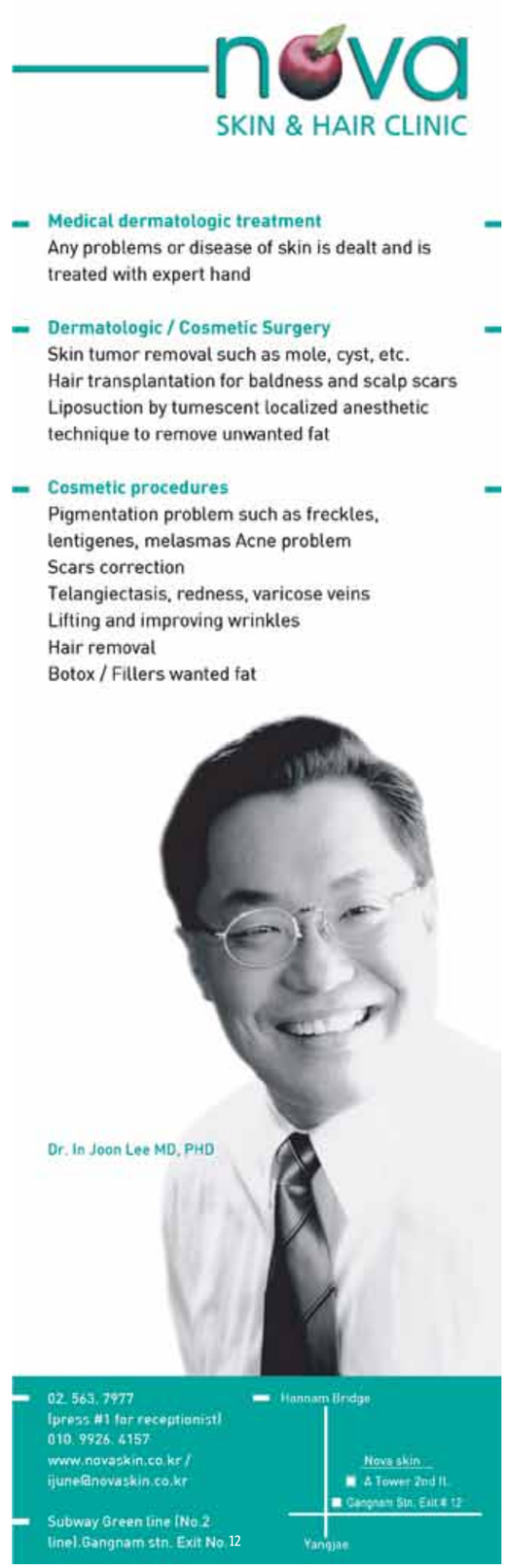
**Orange Tree** - Acoustic bands and solo 9 p.m. until 1 a.m.
**VFW** - Rock stage 9 p.m. until 1 a.m.
**Phillies Basement** - Rock stage 9 p.m. until 1 a.m.

*May 26*

**Phillies upstairs** - Acoustic from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
**The Local** - Acoustic from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
**Camarata Music Co.** - Acoustic bands from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
**Orange Tree** - Acoustic bands and solo 6 p.m. until 1 a.m.
**VFW** - Rock stage 5 p.m. until 1 a.m.
**Phillies Basement** - Rock stage 5 p.m. until 1 a.m.

### PERFORMERS

Johnny Red April, The International Goat Breeders, Nick Lacovino, Gregory Zimmerman, I am John, The 2 Guitars, Richard Babin, The Waves, Michael Burkhardt, Jenny Perelstein, Seth Martin, Jennifer Waescher, Peniswitch, Dirty 30's, Geoff Goodman, Hunger Tree, John Hughes, Mia Zepeda, Yvon Malenfant, The Language of Shapes, Willman and Jenny Unplugged, Swag-Rok, Daniel Vaillancourt, Steve David, Michael David "Aggressive Pedestrian", John Valentine, Ben Akers, Fabulous Pendejos, Michael Flanigan, Magna Fall, Big Boned Rhythm, Minha Band, MWB, Ether, Kurtis Catlin, MISSING JANE, The Total Assholes, Dongmyo Police, Simon Upstone, The Borgnines, Blue Biscuit Blues Band.



# Putting the fun into fund-raising

## P.L.U.R. holds fundraisers to help Seoul's less fortunate

**Story by** Colin Owen Griffin

It stands for Peace, Love, Unity and Respect, and P.L.U.R. lives up to its name. Its mission is to bring people together to attack the problems of homelessness and poverty through volunteer efforts at soup kitchens, food distribution, clothing drives and visits to orphanages. Expats and Koreans of the Seoul-based grassroots organization work together to build relationships with other organizations and NGOs, and develop a network of people who offer their time, care and hope for a better tomorrow.

***"The type of work P.L.U.R. does and the people we serve made it an easy decision."***

Founded by Danny Oh, P.L.U.R. has grown from a small group to over 1,000 members strong. Fund-raising chair Shaun Rajan says the group has been trying to organize similar programs in other Korean cities and contribute volunteer efforts to other Korean NGOs.

"This is my way of giving back to the community I live in," Rajan said. "I have worked with similar organizations back home in India. The type of work P.L.U.R. does and the people we serve made it an easy decision."

Aside from their work in local soup kitchens and field distribution, the volunteers also periodically hold fundraisers to help continue their work.

For the next fundraiser, P.L.U.R. will host a live show, featuring a combination of Korean and expat performers, at Club Ta in Hongdae on Saturday, May 12 at 10 p.m. The show will open with the mellifluous sounds of acoustic performers Thomas Shim and NoNolina, and will also feature the improvisational performances of Seoul City Improv. Blue Biscuit Blues Band and The Willman Band will round up the evening. A donation of 10,000 won is requested at the door, which goes directly to P.L.U.R.'s efforts.

"I think it's important to give a little of my time to help other people who need it. I love to play music, and this is the best way to give from the heart," said Nathan Silver of Blue Biscuit Blues Band. "I have had a lot of experience working with NGOs living in Africa, and when I was contacted about this show, I jumped at the chance to help them through my music. I like what they are doing, and I am glad to help."

"It's great that P.L.U.R. represents Koreans and expats working together to fight poverty and homelessness," said John Wade, who is planning to attend the benefit. "It's only 10,000 won, and I think it is important to take advantage of opportunities to help, especially when it's a great show."



NO NOLINA



THE WILLMAN band



THOMAS SHIM

Mark your calendar for this evening of entertainment and chance to join the folks at P.L.U.R. in their efforts to give aid and comfort to those suffering from homelessness and poverty.

You can find out how to volunteer with P.L.U.R. by joining the "Volunteer for PLUR" Facebook group.

**P.L.U.R. event at Club Ta**

***When:*** Saturday, May 12 at 10.p.m.
***Where:*** Club Ta in Hongdae
***Cost:*** 10,000 won donation
***Featuring:*** Thomas Shim, NoNolina, Seoul City Improv, Blue Biscuit Blues Band and The Willman Band.



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## JAPANESE NOISE ROCK DANCE DUO

# MOJA

## STORMS SEOUL

**Story by** Jaiden Mackenzie



Moja have showcased their hybrid of chaotic drum-and-bass driven dance punk and noise rock in Japan, England, Italy, Hong Kong, Canada and the United States. On May 18 and 19, the Tokyo duo will make their Korean live debut with a pair of gigs in Seoul at Hongdae venues Club FF and Salon Badabie.

Bassist Haru and drummer Masumi formed Moja (pronounced "mo-ya") in the fall of 2006. When they first began making music together, they had no intention of being a duo.

"Haru and I played together in another band before Moja," shares Masumi. "We had a vocalist and a guitarist and just played typical Japanese rock stuff. One day the vocalist and the guitarist quit. Haru and I wanted to keep playing together so we decided to continue as a duo."

And while becoming a two-piece was unplanned, they learned quickly that there were some definite advantages to it.

"We realized that we have more space to express ourselves when we played as a duo," says Masumi. "It's also a lot easier to make tour schedules when there's just me and Haru to worry about."

International gigs are a big priority for Moja. In 2007 they made their first foray overseas for a concert in New York. Since then they've gone on to play numerous club shows abroad and have appeared at music festivals such as North by Northeast, Le Festival Envol et Macadam, Italia Wave Love Festival, Music Matters, and South by Southwest.

"Visiting new places and learning about different cultures allow us to experience many things and also stimulate us," says Masumi. "We want to keep trying to spread our music all over the world."

*"Visiting new places and learning about different cultures allow us to experience many things and also stimulate us. We want to keep trying to spread our music all over the world."*

"Every place we've visited has had great audiences and we've always had a really good time. When we played in Italy, our concert was at a soccer stadium. It was amazing. We didn't expect to play at such a huge venue. We were shocked when we saw the size of the stage."

They may have gotten a bit of rock star treatment in Italy, but more often than not, Moja's gigs take place in much smaller spaces. Occasionally they have found themselves booked in unconventional performance sites, but like all indie touring acts, Moja are quite good at being able to adapt to any situation.

"We recorded our debut album 'Moja' (2009) in Virginia," says Masumi. "While we were there the studio owner booked a concert for us. It took place in the warehouse of a snack food factory. I had to borrow another band's drum kit to do the show. I usually use four cymbal stands, but the drummer only had one. I said I needed at least two to play so he stuck a stick in the air hole on top of the bass drum and put one more cymbal on top of it. It was very unstable and people kept on coming up and fixing it while we played. Everyone enjoyed our show, though, and the whole night was a lot of fun."

In March, Moja issued their sophomore effort, "Super Ultra Gold 79." Recorded in New York and Tokyo, the eight-track offering is a fantastic, high-energy affair that is overflowing with hard-hitting, dynamic underground rock.

The band decided to release the album only as a limited edition LP and as a free digital download from their Web site. "Super Ultra Gold 79" is not available in CD.

"We felt that vinyl was better suited to our sound than CDs," says Masumi. "As for the free download, we want more people to come to our shows. We feel that our live performances are the best way for people to truly experience Moja. We're hoping that if people can download 'Super Ultra Gold 79' for free, they'll want to come see us perform after hearing the album."

Moja will be bringing CD copies of their first full-length LP, "Super Ultra Gold 79," and T-shirts with them when they visit Seoul in mid-May.

"We're excited to learn about Korea's indie music scene and to discover new bands in Seoul," says Masumi. "I saw a Japanese TV program about Hongdae and it looked like a really cool place. I can't wait to explore the area and eat lots of delicious Korean food. I love kimchi and japchae."



# SEOUL UNDERGROUND

## *Interview with Aaron Cho*

**Groove** with SeoulVibes / **Photos** by Peter Shin



*"The music industry is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side."*



It is rare that we interview an individual who has nothing to gain by the publicity. It could be a case of promoting a CD, an event or exposure for potential bookings. We realize that we act as a conduit for public relations for DJs both domestic and abroad. We try to secure interviews with artists who love their craft, the music they play and produce. Accepting this reality we try to promote talent that will appeal to our readers in the hopes that it will improve their quality of life on the peninsula. The balance sometimes is difficult to maintain and at times we question whether it has any purpose or substance. Then we meet an artist named Aaron Cho who developed the website Seoul Underground and we the see the positive and hear the music in its purity.

### *What were your experiences like abroad?*

It was pretty cool. I went to the U.S. with my father at a very young age and spent most of my childhood years there. My dad originally went there to get his Ph.D. and I just tagged along. Most of my friends were from different backgrounds so I had the opportunity to experience different cultures and I believe that this had an influence in shaping who I am today.

### *When you returned did you experience reverse culture shock?*

I was accustomed to American customs, core beliefs, freedom of thought, creativity and cultural relativism. It was pretty hard getting used to a more conservative social structure. When I came back to Korea a decade ago, many considered that being different was strange and there was a much higher value for the collective and less respect for the individual. Everyone focused on being better than everyone else rather than trying something different. This was noticeable not only in social values but also in popular culture. The style of popular music was relatively uniform and everyone pretty much liked the same thing. I was shocked at how the bandwagon effect could have such an impact on society and how the music industry took advantage of this to sell tickets to events where the singers don't actually sing -- but that was 10 years ago.

### *How has your musical training helped you as a DJ?*

While living in the States, I was part of the Austin Youth Orchestra and then the Schaumberg Youth Orchestra. It was a chance for me to develop a feel for what sounds good. Being part of an orchestra also helped in understanding the role of a single instrument relating to music as a whole. When selecting my tracks, I pay attention to the role of each sound and the sensation that it creates. As for technique, I consider key modulation when mixing tracks so that I may create the desired effect.

### *Do you consider yourself an idealist?*

I just do what I like.

### *Why did you call the site Underground Seoul?*

I believe that labeling things as 'underground' or 'mainstream' is meaningless because things always change. I just thought that the concept fits because the underground is usually where fresh things start out. Seoul Underground also refers to the subway system and the website was designed to be compatible with smart phones so that one can listen to music underground.

### *What is the raison d'etre of the site?*

I wanted to make a website that introduced variety and fresh music. There is no big mission. It's simply an online exhibition. I want it to become a musical 'portrait' or 'mosaic' of the underground clubbing scene. I choose to write all the content in English with the idea that listeners and other artists around the world may connect to our underground scene and its artists.

### *Do you think there is a division between domestic and foreign DJs?*

There is no division between people who love music.

### *What are the positives and negatives that exist in the scene?*

I'm hesitant to judge things as good or bad. I just try to see things as it is. Clubbing is getting quite commercial in South Korea. It has evolved over the years and now, it's become bigger than ever. If you walk around the streets of Hongdae, you can hear electro beats and catchy melodies coming from clubs, bars, and even small clothing stores. There are huge clubs with state-of-the-art sound systems, bright lasers, massive smoke machines, and girls dancing in sexy outfits. This is all pretty cool, but I believe that this is just the beginning. The scene is still young and electronic dance music is still new to the public. I predict that it will soon mature and more people will start to search for quality music. Thus, I believe that the current commercial music scene is just part of the evolution and necessary for the underground scene to grow as well.

### *Who is part of your mosaic?*

Adroit Joe, Alpha Steppa, Audio Sex, Crab, Didi Bones, Dwell Meshe, DJ Fenner, DJ Jung, Helix Squared, J-Path, Lee Fresh, Lewis Anthony, Mykian, Oilcan Boyd, raiCO, Yann Cavaille, and myself. I hope more artists sign-up to our site, but I am certainly impressed with the talent we have so far.

### *Do you have any advice for those actively involved in the scene?*

Keep going. Keep moving. Keep exploring.

***Aaron Cho (DJ/Founder)***
*seoulunderground.com@gmail.com*
*http://www.seoulunderground.com*

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# THE BEST ALTERNATIVE CINEMAS IN SEOUL

**Story & Photos by** Stephanie Potell

Have you ever seen a film under a hill or over an intersection, or been served cookies in a ritzy private booth at CGV? If not, then it is time to step away from your local movie house and try something new. Just be sure to check the language – not all screened films are available in English.





### KOREAN FILM ARCHIVE (1)

Usually people who show up early pass their time gobbling an entire bag of popcorn before the movie even starts. Take better care of your waistline and instead visit the Korean Film Archive. Browse the on-site Korean Film Museum, which covers everything from the burgeoning industry to the representation of women in film. Afterwards head downstairs; your free ticket is waiting at the counter.

***Museum & theater:*** *Free*
***Tip:*** *Check online for the screening schedule.*
***Directions:*** *Go to Sinchon Station, Line 2, Exit 3. Catch bus 171 and get off at Nuritkum Square. KOFA is inside a wooden building at the back of the square.*
***Contact:*** *www.koreafilm.org, (02) 3153-2001*

### SILVER CINEMA (2)

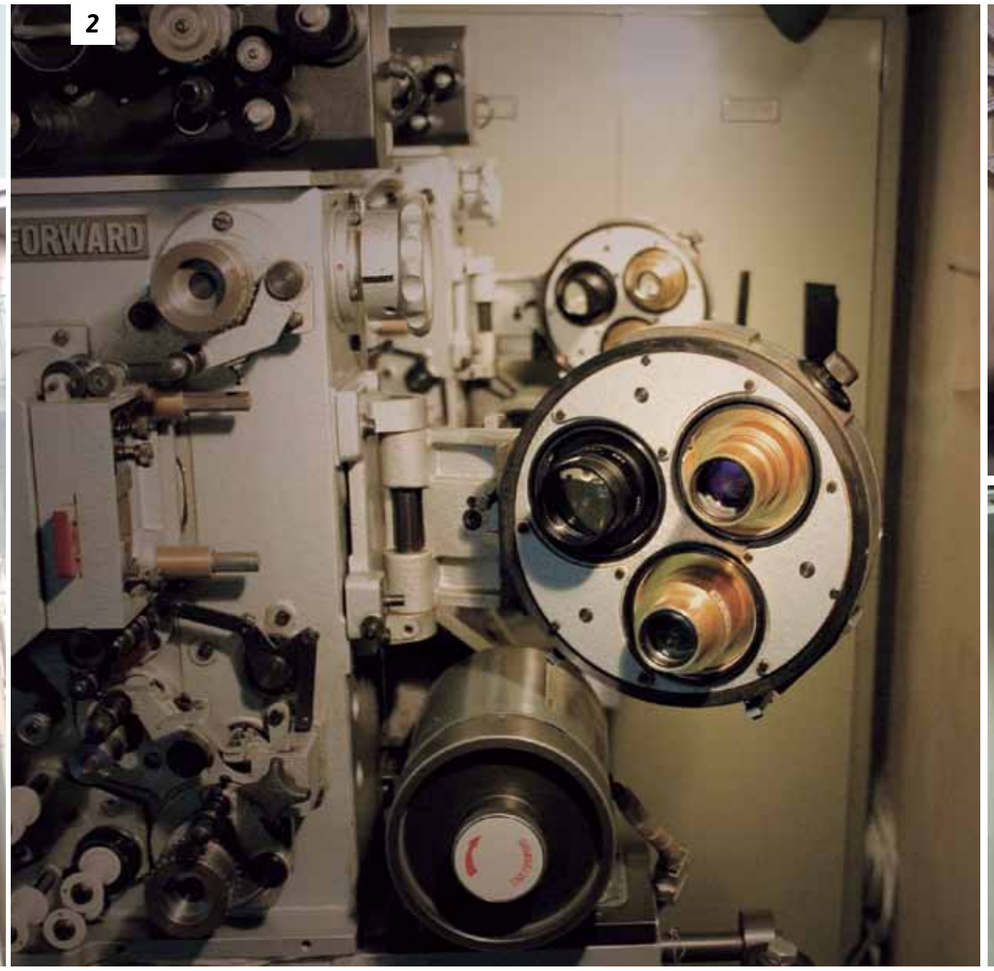
There was a time when knees were titillating, men battled African wildlife and alcoholism with the same rigor and the von Trapps were still singing. Relive those great moments in Hollywood on the big screen at Silver Cinema. The cut-rate senior citizen price ensures a sea of white hair to authenticate your experience. If you aren't quite feeling nostalgic, you could also buy a ticket for the adjacent theater, Cinematheque, which plays independent and foreign films.

***Silver Cinema:*** *5,000 won, or 2,000 won for people over 55*
***Tip:*** *Silver Cinema screens one movie a week and the movie changes every Friday.*
***Cinematheque:*** *6,000 won*
***Directions:*** *Go to Jongno 3-ga Station, Line 5, Exit 5. Silver Cinema and Cinematheque are both on the 4th floor of the Nakwon Arcade (the white building built over the intersection).*
***Online:*** *www.cinematheque.seoul.kr*






1




2

**ARTHOUSE MOMO (3)**

One of the prettiest campuses in Seoul, Ewha Womans University has a grand entrance – designed by the prominent French architect Dominique Perrault – that carves down, through and up the hillside. On either side of the path are giant glass windows, which reveal (especially after sunset) an underground rabbit warren of classrooms and lounges. As if studying underground isn't novel enough, you can also see a movie at the indie gem, Arthouse Momo. Although there are only two screens, there is a good array of films from around the world – just check that the film is in a language you know.

***Arthouse Momo:*** *9,000 won*
***Tip:*** *Only bottled water allowed inside*
***Directions:*** *Go to Ewha Womans University Station, Line 2, Exit 3. Walk down the main entrance and enter door #3 (ECC Gate 3) on your left. The theater is down the hall on the left.*
***Online:*** *www.cineart.co.kr*

*As if studying underground isn't novel enough, you can also see a movie at the indie gem, Arthouse Momo. Although there are only two screens, there is a good array of films from around the world.*








2




3

**CINÉ DE CHEF (4)**

While this upscale theater is a branch of CGV, a visit here is anything but run-of-the-mill. The trip down luxury lane starts when the elevator doors open onto a dimly lit and atmospheric hall. Dine at the divine French & Italian restaurant on site before moving to your booth for two. The plush chairs recline and are secluded from prying eyes. You will feel like you are flying first class when the flight attendant (oops, I mean usher) brings you a plate of cookies and a bottle of Santa Vittoria peach iced tea.

***Cine de Chef:*** *Movie tickets are 40,000 won, the lunch menu starts at 40,000 won and the dinner menu starts at 60,000.*
***Tip:*** *Reservations are required.*
***Directions:*** *Go to Apgujeong Station, Line 3, Exit 3. Walk straight and Ciné de Chef is inside the CGV theater on the left.*
***Online:*** *www.cinedechef.co.kr*

*Dine at the divine French & Italian restaurant on site before moving to your booth for two. The plush chairs recline and are secluded from prying eyes.*

# CINÉ DE CHEF:
## WINE, DINE & WATCH A FILM

**By** Dean Crawford

My two main passions in life are cinema and food. Therefore, it's easy to feel quite spoiled in Korea as tickets are half the price of those in England and – "beondegi" (boiled silkworm pupae) aside – Korean food is great. So while looking for somewhere to take my girlfriend for her birthday, it appeared as if the gods were listening to my prayers when I stumbled across Ciné de Chef.

Situated in Seoul's stylish Apgujeong area and serving French and Italian food, the Visit Korea website calls CGV's Ciné de Chef as a "new style restaurant that connects both movie theater and restaurant." The dining area is described as luxurious and the seven chefs are referred to as exquisite. This alone would have been enough to get me to go, but the cinema itself boasts two high-tech screens with 11.1 surround sound, not to mention the luxurious leather chairs that cost 8 million won apiece.

The restaurant, a two-minute walk from Apgujeong Station, provides a good first impression. The décor was stylish and the staff extremely friendly as they showed us to our table. I was informed that the cinema sat mere meters away, but for the first time in my life, I really didn't care what was showing as I was more excited about the pre-showing meal. The à la carte menu was impressive, but the best option appeared to be the set menu with courses A, B and C priced at 60,000 won, 80,000 won and 100,000 won, respectively.





*I never thought these words would come out of my mouth, but the pollock giblets were to die for.*

The starters looked interesting with a selection of delicious sounding salads or pan-fried pomfret, but it was the main courses that caught the eye. Grilled prime Korean beef tenderloin, oven-baked rack of lamb, pan-fried salmon and gnocchi, pan-fried seasonal fish fillet, and saffron risotto were the options at 60,000 won. For a little extra you can add other options like paella or poached lobster.

While making our choice, head chef Han Jae-hee walked over to the table to introduce himself and talk us through the menu.

An exceptionally pleasant man and very knowledgeable about his craft, he previously worked for Morad Mazouz of Sketch in London. He informed us that he had been working at Ciné de Chef for only a month and that the menu we were looking at, while impressive, was not entirely of his own creation, suggesting we try the new menu he had been working on.

We emphatically accepted his offer.

The result: the Ciné de Chef Experience Set, which featured eight exquisite courses. I never thought these words would come out of my mouth, but the pollock giblets were to die for. The other stand-out dishes were the eggplant roulade in a mozzarella and rucola purée and the poached lobster and grilled prawns on an assorted fruit salsa, but the pièce de résistance was without doubt the main course.





*Having our jackets removed and our bags put in storage to free clutter was a nice touch.*



The grilled salmon was amazing, but the Korean beef was one of the best steaks I've ever had. I thought it strange when we weren't provided with a steak knife, but it turned out not to be necessary – the steak was soft, succulent, juicy and melted in the mouth. After the eighth course, I was so stuffed that I slouched in my chair in a food-induced bliss, forgetting about the film we had yet to see. The English-language option on this particular night was Cameron Crowe's "We Bought a Zoo," which I previewed in January's issue of Groove Korea.

The curtains draping from the walls reminded me of a throwback to movie theaters of old, and having our jackets removed and our bags put in storage to limit clutter was a nice touch. The setting was perfect for a couple, as our own private sofa gave us the space needed to relax, cuddle up and enjoy a film in total comfort and luxury.

The only negative I could find with the cinema was that it was too comfortable and that I might commit one of the biggest cinema sins of all: falling asleep during the film. With complimentary Heineken and snacks in hand, the film began, and much like I had predicted, "We Bought a Zoo" was a solid, feel-good film, if not a little too sentimental at times.

At 40,000 won for a movie ticket and 80,000 won apiece for the meal, it certainly isn't something I could do every week, but for a special occasion it was a great choice.

I hope Ciné de Chef is the first attempt of many to find other interesting places to watch movies in Korea. Most venues seem to revolve around food or alcohol, with the Wine Train a future option. That could be another pricey outing, but would also be just right for a special occasion.

Now let me think, who do I know that has a birthday coming up?

***For pricing, show times and directions, go to*** *www.cinedechef.co.kr*



# AT THE BOX OFFICE

## *MAY RELEASES*

**By** Dean Crawford

### THE AVENGERS

***Directed by*** *Joss Whedon*

May **1**

**Action - Adventure**
*96 Minutes*




***P R E V I E W***

One of the most ambitious film projects of all time finally flies onto our screens in May, when superheroes such as Iron Man, Captain America, Thor and The Hulk finally assemble in the same film for Marvel's "The Avengers."

Norse god Loki, banished from Asgard after trying to overthrow his brother Thor, has created an army that is intent on destroying the earth. Nick Fury is the director of S.H.I.E.L.D., an agency with exceptional human beings, who is forced to put together a team of superheroes to fight the threat of Loki and save the earth at the same time. This is when heroes who usually work alone must come together as one team to save the earth. Robert Downey, Jr. once again returns as Iron Man, as does Chris Hemsworth as Thor. Chris Evans is Captain America and Scarlett Johansson and Jeremy Renner return as Hawkeye and Black Widow, respectively.

The only difference in casting from the Marvel Cinematic Universe established so far is Mark Ruffalo, who has taken over from Edward Norton as Bruce Banner/The Hulk. It might sound a little far-fetched to call a film based on a comic book one of the most ambitious film projects of all time, but if you think of the journey the film has taken so far, I stand by that claim.

The idea for a film version of "The Avengers" was proposed back in 2005 by Marvel chairman Avi Arad after the studio declared its independence. The plan was to give each main character of "The Avengers" their own standalone film that takes place in the same cinematic universe, just like in the comic books. To date, this plan has had mixed success. Robert Downey, Jr. as Iron Man was an inspired choice and the film worked really well. It brought a sense of fun back to the genre after "dark" became the buzzword on every producer's lips upon the success of "Batman Begins."

I was pleasantly surprised with "Thor" but "The Incredible Hulk," "Iron Man 2" and "Captain America" fell short of my expectations.

Despite the mixed critical success for Marvel's films thus far, I feel the linear strategy that involves establishing each character with the clear goal of bringing them together for "The Avengers" will work wonders as it shows respect for the fans and for the characters themselves.

Sam Raimi's "Spiderman 3" showed us how easy it is to ruin a film when you have too many characters, but "The Avengers" looks as if it's going to be full of action without forgoing a great story.

### SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN

***Directed by*** *Rupert Sanders*

May **31**

**Action - Adventure**
*96 Minutes*




***P R E V I E W***

In England we have an expression that goes something along the lines of: "You can wait 30 minutes for a bus and then three come along at once." In this instance, the phrase applies to movies based on the ancient Grimm fairy tale "Snow White," with Tarsem Singh's "Mirror Mirror" and Rachel Goldenberg's "Grimm's Snow White" being released in quick succession. The most recent is Rupert Sanders' "Snow White and the Huntsman" starring Chris Hemsworth as The Huntsman, Charlize Theron as the evil Queen Ravenna and Kristen Stewart as Snow White.

The synopsis is as follows: The evil Queen Ravenna, beautiful and vain, is the merciless ruler of a kingdom that is both enchanted and mysterious. After discovering from her magic mirror that one day her stepdaughter, Snow White, will not only overtake her as "the fairest one of all" but will also overthrow the queen and become the rightful ruler of the kingdom, she orders a huntsman to take Snow White into the dark forest and kill her. But in a spin on the classic Grimm fairy tale, the huntsman ultimately becomes her protector and teacher, as Snow White, aided by the seven dwarves, battles Queen Ravenna in an attempt to triumph over the evil queen.

With Tarsem Singh's "Mirror Mirror" being a lighter, slightly campier incarnation of the fairy tale, it appears as if "Snow White and the Huntsman" is going down a darker road, which is unsurprising considering the producer of the film was also behind the re-imagining of Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland." Not that this lends the film any kind of credence whatsoever, as I thought "Alice" was a terrible film and made a mockery out of the use of 3-D, but it gives an idea of the tone and what the production design will be like. The trailers and images so far have indeed been gothic and are a world away from the Disney version, with large beasts lurking in the dark and brooding forests. Producer Joe Roth told Entertainment Weekly that the film is following the original "Snow White" fairy tale in as much as they "retain the basic story in the same way we retained the basic story of 'Alice,' a young girl meant to be the queen who is cast out." The apple is still there, as are the seven dwarves (who incidentally have some real talent in their ranks with Deadwood's Ian McShane, Bob Hoskins, Ray Winstone and Nick Frost) but the rest is pure commercial license.

The films looks as if it has a "Lord of the Rings" feel to it, which I am all for. The visuals are striking and Charlize Theron looks menacing as the evil queen, but my main concern is Kristen Stewart as Snow White. To date, I haven't seen a single film that I have liked her in, but let's hope this is the start of her London bus syndrome. We've waited a long time for her to act well in a film; let's hope this is the first.





# THE DVD CORNER

## *MOVIE REVIEWS*

**By** Daniel Joseph Vorderstrasse

### ALWAYS

***Directed by*** *Song Il-gon*

*PG-* **12**

**Drama**
*101 Minutes*



***R E V I E W***

The sacrifices a single man is willing to make for a loved one are portrayed beautifully in this romantic drama, which first premiered at the 2011 Busan International Film Festival.

Former junior boxing champion Jang Cheol-min (So Ji-sub) moonlights as a parking garage attendant. By day, he uneventfully passes the time as a water deliveryman. When Ha Jung-hwa (Han Hyo-joo) enters his cinema booth to watch Korean dramas, he realizes she is blind and has mistaken him for an elderly predecessor. As time and viewings pass, Cheol-min is smitten with Jung-hwa and they agree to go on a date.

The first night out spells disaster as Cheol-min, ashamed of his mischievous past, inadvertently alienates Jung-hwa. But fate intervenes later when he prevents her boss from assaulting her. After refusing his proposal to become her provider, he secretly looks over her in the shadows until she eventually falls for him.

With Jung-hwa as a new inspiration, and armed with an invigorated spirit, he humbly returns to the ring with unparalleled drive and determination. His main motivation is to provide for her. As the relationship unfolds, viewers realize that the two have ironically crossed paths before, and their meeting, and subsequent bond, may not have been a chance encounter.

The main premise is a love story between two people with an incomparable magnetism toward one another. There is no special cinematography to enhance the viewing, but quality acting from both leads – combined with human emotion – makes this an enticing story. All the qualities and adequate plotlines are contained to produce a feel-good story that shows any obstacle can be overcome with will and desire.

Viewers should expect a pleasing film with a few twists on the path to meeting one's soul mate.

*The main premise is a love story between two people with an incomparable magnetism toward one another. There is no special cinematography to enhance the viewing, but quality acting from both leads — combined with human emotion — make this an enticing story. All the qualities and adequate plotlines are contained to produce a feel-good story that shows any obstacle can be overcome with will and desire.*

### PUNCH

***Directed by*** *Lee Han*

*PG-* **12**

**Drama**
*107 Minutes*




***R E V I E W***

Based on Kim Yeo-ryung's popular novel of the same name, "Punch" is a coming-of-age story which follows a rebellious adolescent as he navigates through life's challenges to manhood.

Doh Wan-deuk (Yoo Ah-in) is a poor high school student whose parents have left him to fend for himself. His mother abandoned him in infancy. His father suffers from an illness that has turned him into a hunchback. After his cabaret business is shuttered, he and his brother are forced to travel afar to seek income far from home.

Wan-deuk's guardian during his father's travels is his neighbor and quirky homeroom teacher, Lee Dong-joo (Kim Yoon-seok). Facing constant belittlement, Wan-deuk prays for Dong-joo's demise.

On top of life's stresses, Wan-deuk's turbulent personality pushes him into even more trouble. After he attacks a neighbor who insults him, Dong-joo vouches for him and is quick to offer a defense to the authorities.

Dong-joo convinces Wan-deuk's father that kickboxing is a practical channel for the boy's aggression and excuses him from homeroom to train.

As Wan-deuk encounters more problems than he can handle, Dong-joo encourages and persuades him towards a better life. Dong-joo seeks reunion between Wan-deuk and his estranged mother, pushing reunification and forgiveness.

One of the top-three grossing Korean films of 2011, "Punch" offers a script that is simply enjoyable, and the acting and moments of humor ease the tension and keep viewers engaged.

Although the movie lacks any dynamic developments, action sequences or passionate love tales, the narrative of characters making the best of a bad situation is presented in grand fashion.

*The film is a true coming-of-age story as a young man stumbles upon more troubles than is deserved. The script is simply enjoyable, with complimentary acting and moments of humor that ease the tension.*

E-mail danielv@groovekorea.com to add your exhibit!

# 20 foreign exhibits for May

**1**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
Spectrum
Running Dates:
thru May 5
Location:
The Museum of Photography, Seoul (Mongchontoseong station, line 8 exit 2)
Medium:
photography

**2**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
"Flow"- the current that carries
Running Dates:
every Saturday in May
Location:
Gallery Golmok (Noksapyeong station, line 6 exit 3)
Medium:
performance art, video, sound

**3**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
Gallery Golmok Art Bazaar
Running Dates:
every Sunday in May
Location:
Gallery Golmok (Noksapyeong station, line 6 exit 3)
Medium:
Art marketplace

**4**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
4th Seoul Modern Art Show
Running Dates:
May 3 – 7
Location:
Center Exhibition Hall 2 (Yangjae station); take taxi to Yangjae Flower Market
Medium:
various

**5**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
SeMA Youth: 12 Events for 12 Rooms
Running Dates:
thru May 17
Location:
Location: Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) (City Hall station, line 1/2 exit 1)
Medium:
paintings, installation, photography

**6**
Artist Name:
Paul McCarthy
Exhibition name:
Paul McCarthy: nine dwarves
Running Dates:
thru May 12
Location:
Kukje Gallery (Anguk station, line 3 exit 1)
Medium:
sculpture, installation

**7**
Artist Name:
Andrew Lane, Beth Livensperger, et al.
Exhibition name:
New York New Work
Running Dates:
thru May 12
Location:
Gallery 4walls (Hakdong station, line 7 exit 1)
Medium:
paintings

**8**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
Beyong Geometry
Running Dates:
thru May 9
Location:
MOA Gallery, Paju-si, Heyri Art Village
Medium:
drawings, paintings, digital art

**9**
Artist Name:
Koen Van Den Broek
Exhibition name:
From the East to the West and Back
Running Dates:
thru May 19
Location:
Gallery Baton (Seocho station, line 2 exit 3)
Medium:
paintings

**10**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
HoMe: Living with Art & Design
Running Dates:
thru May 26
Location:
The Columns (Itaewon station, line 6 exit 2)
Medium:
installation, paintings, furniture

**11**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
Vogue Moment
Running Dates:
thru May 27
Location:
Museum of Art Seoul National University (SNU station, line 2, exit 3)
Medium:
various

**12**
Artist Name:
Olafur Eliasson
Exhibition name:
Your Uncertain Shadow
Running Dates:
thru May 31
Location:
PKM Trinity Gallery (Apgujeong station, line 3 exit 1)
Medium:
video, mixed media, installation

**13**
Artist Name:
group exhibition
Exhibition name:
Cartoon World
Running Dates:
thru June 17
Location:
Seoul Olympic Museum of Art (Mongchontoseong station, line 8 exit 1)
Medium:
drawings, paintings, digital art

**14**
Artist Name:
Kim Hee-jung, Debbie Han
Exhibition name:
Photography, Modernity of the Eye
Running Dates:
thru June 10
Location:
GoEun Museum, Busan (Haeundae station, line 2 & Dongbaek station, line 2)
Medium:
photography

**15**
Artist Name:
Mayumi Terada
Exhibition name:
Living Absence
Running Dates:
thru June 9
Location:
The Museum of Photography, Seoul (Mongchontoseong station, line 8 exit 2)
Medium:
photography

**16**
Artist Name:
Veronica Bailey
Exhibition name:
Modern Myths
Running Dates:
May 10 – June 8
Location:
Gaain Gallery (Gyeongbokgung station, line 3 exit 3; transfer to bus 1711 or 1020 until Byucksan Pyeongchang Hillstate, 400m walk)

**17**
Artist Name:
Jürgen Nefzger, Kodama Fusako
Exhibition name:
White Future: Thinking of Nuclear
Running Dates:
thru June 24
Location:
GoEun Museum, Busan (Haeundae station, line 2 & Dongbaek station, line 2)
Medium:
photography

**18**
Artist Name:
Louise Bourgeois
Exhibition name:
Personages
Running Dates:
May 23 – June 29
Location:
Kukje Gallery (Anguk station, exit 1; walk toward Gyeongbokgung - across street)
Medium:
mixed media, installation, sculpture

**19**
Artist Name:
international group exhibition
Exhibition name:
x-sound: John Cage, Nam June Paik
Running Dates:
thru July 1
Location:
Nam June Paik Art Center (take subway to Shinnonhyeon station, line 9 exit 6; take bus 5001 or 5003 in front of Krispy Kreme to Shingal Police Station)

**20**
Artist Name:
William Kentridge & Christian Boltanski
Exhibition name:
Media Art from the Museum Collection
Running Dates:
thru November 30
Location:
National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea, Gwacheon (Seoul Grand Park station, line 4; take a shuttle bus from exit 4, take a tram from exit 2)

E-mail danielv@groovekorea.com to add your exhibit!





# CHANGING THE WORLD
# ONE COOKIE AT A TIME
## GIRL SCOUTS GIVING YOUNG GIRLS THE TOOLS TO BECOME LEADERS

**Story by** Gwen Devera Waden / **Photos by** Victoria Burgamy






COMMUNITY
Girl Scouts I

Girl Scouting is about much more than just selling cookies. Participation in Girl Scouts lays a foundation for girls to grow up and take charge of their futures by developing their courage, character and confidence to be agents of change. Girl Scouts practice and learn, through troop and individual activities, to make their communities and the world a better place.

Considered the preeminent leadership platform for girls, Girl Scouts began as an organization with 18 girls 100 years ago. Now with 3.2 million members in over 90 countries, including Korea, members of the movement continue the tradition today.

Troop leaders are the foot soldiers of this organization – volunteers who dedicate hundreds of hours to deliver a year-round leadership program for the seven to 25 girls assigned to their troops. The volunteers are unpaid and, here in Korea, come from all walks of life in the expatriate community: Active duty U.S. service members, dependents of U.S. service members, U.S. Embassy employees and Americans from other affiliations from around the peninsula all come together to give service to their community and help girls grow strong.

The Girl Scout leadership encourages open attitudes, respect for differences and sensitivity to the needs of others. "If each person is accepted and valued for who she is, all of us are enriched," says the West Pacific Girl Scout Guide, which governs Korea's Girl Scouts.

Ana Maria Chávez, the CEO of the Girl Scouts of the USA, has said that Girl Scouts encourage the "just-go-for-it attitude." The organization has declared that 2012 is the Year of the Girl, in which the Girl Scout organization will endeavor to close the gap between men and women in leadership positions within one generation.

Is Korea ready for it? With the help of community volunteers and partnerships with Korean Friends and Girl Guides, Girl Scouts throughout Korea are closing the leadership gap by helping over 400 Girl Scouts nationwide, mostly U.S. citizens or daughters of U.S. nationals, become responsible citizens and women of character, courage and confidence who will make the world a better place.

# *Troop leaders and other parent volunteers teach girls to dream big, set goals and work hard to earn badges and awards.*

Girls starting puberty (4th to 8th grade) are at a higher risk for low self-esteem, which results in depression, poor academic achievement and negative body image, according to a California State University study. The study states that obesity and media influence are contributing factors, but small group interactions and counseling have been the most effective in changing girls' attitudes toward personal roles and home and family responsibilities.

Troop leaders and other parent volunteers aim to turn the tide. They teach girls to dream big, set goals and work hard to earn badges and awards. Even the popular cookie sales teach entrepreneurial skills such as setting goals, making decisions, money management, people skills and business ethics. By selling cookies, girls learn inventory control, marketing and how to connect with their community. They also practice service and philanthropy as they decide which community organizations and charitable purposes will get a portion of the proceeds from their cookie sales. Most troops in Korea decide to give to local charities such as homeless shelters, homes for battered women, orphanages and local libraries. This spirit of service and the idea that it's necessary to be a change agent in order to make the world a better place are both integral to the Girl Scout program.

*Girl Scouts throughout Korea are closing the leadership gap by helping over 400 Girl Scouts nationwide become responsible citizens and women of character, courage and confidence who will make the world a better place.*



# GOING FOR BRONZE

## GIRLS FROM TWO TROOPS IN KOREA TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

**Story by** Gwen Devera Waden **/ Photos by** Gwen Devera Waden, Victoria Burgamy and Ryan Noel

At what age should you start asking girls to become leaders and take on tasks to change the world? Once they graduate from college, or maybe in their late teens? For the girls of Girl Scouts Overseas Junior Troop 10 of Camp Humphreys military base in Pyeongtaek and its sister Junior Troop 22 in Seoul, the answer is just 9 or 10 years old.

These 13 elementary school-aged girls are currently working toward their Bronze award, a leadership journey and the highest honor that a Junior Girl Scout can earn. (Silver and Gold awards are reserved for middle and high school Girl Scouts, respectively.)

To earn the Bronze award, Junior Girl Scouts are required to team up with other girls of the same age and pick an issue or project to tackle.

These projects are what Girl Scouting is all about: girls learning to be responsible citizens and growing in confidence, courage and character while undertaking campaigns to make the world a better place – one cookie, one food drive, one clothing drive, one bridge, one commercial and one step at a time.

*These elementary school-aged girls are currently working toward their Bronze award, a leadership journey and the highest honor that a Junior Girl Scout can earn. Girls from the troop in Pyeongtaek will build a portable bridge to use in their bridging ceremonies, while girls from a troop in Seoul have launched an anti-smoking campaign.*












## WALK THE BRIDGE

The Humphreys Junior Troop 10 wanted to give back to the organization that has provided them with the opportunity of Scouting while overseas. Ten girls thought long and hard about how to develop a project that would continue or be in use even after their departure from Korea. They also thought about how much they'd enjoyed all of the hands-on activities they have done, the journey they have taken and the teamwork and camaraderie they've gained through their experiences as Scouts. So they decided to build a bridge.

In the Girl Scouts, a bridging ceremony is an important symbolic activity typically at the end of the school year that recognizes and welcomes girls into the next step of Scouting. The actual walk over the bridge represents crossing the pathway to the next level. Humphreys has some nice bridges at the base of Beacon Hill, but because of inclement weather in the last couple of years, the girls have had to conduct their Bridging Ceremonies indoors without any.

The girls of Junior Troop 10 have come up with a solution so that future Scouts can take the walk in any weather condition by building a specialized portable bridge, which can be used either inside or outside. "Just like our founder Juliette Gordon Low, we, too, are building bridges into the future," participant Kaya said.

Over the past few years, the Camp Humphreys U.S. military base has developed and turned into an enduring community, and the girls have seen firsthand all the construction and contractors involved in the transformation of this post. They have read about various groundbreaking ceremonies for new schools and housing in the area. Now they have begun developing their own ideas for leaving their mark on the community, starting with sketches and drawings of bridges.

The girls are also bringing their plans to their school's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics project. "I am excited to tell them about building our bridge and maybe get more tips on building from the engineers," Scout Sante said.

The girls have taken their blueprints straight to the top and asked for assistance and supplies from the garrison Directorate of Public Works and Far East District Corps of Engineers. They have timelines in place and are writing letters for supply requests and engineering assistance. Since April they have been aiming to make office calls to pitch their project and gather supplies.

And if all else fails, they still must stick to that infamous Scout motto: "Be Prepared." Plan B involves asking local construction and hardware stores for supply donations.

The girls estimate that construction should be completed on May 23, just in time for this year's bridging ceremony.

*"Just like our founder Juliette Gordon Low, we, too, are building bridges into the future."*

*– Kaya*

## CAMPAIGN WITH A TWIST

Three girls from Seoul's Junior Troop 22 are attempting to earn their Bronze award by undertaking a Korea-wide "Stop Smoking Campaign." Going beyond the use of fliers and posters, they are targeting two media outlets that are in almost every living room in Korea – television and radio. The girls developed a TV commercial concept, wrote a script, came up with their own jingle and figured out which slogans to use to imprint their message in the minds of young American teens in Korea: to stop tobacco use early or before it even starts.

All three girls said they are going for the Scouts' top award with an anti-smoking campaign because they believe that it's important to help people to stop smoking.

For Anabeth, the reason is personal. One of her aunts died from lung cancer through secondhand smoke from her husband. "It really stinks to smoke and it hurts people," she said. "I don't understand why people smoke. Why would you pay to hurt yourself? It makes me feel good to help people and it is so much fun doing the commercial stuff."

And as Tamari said: "The campaign is important because we are trying to stop people from smoking. It is not good. I just think these people are crazy because they are putting bad drugs like tobacco, cigars and other stuff like that (into their bodies)."

Kaitlin said that she was willing to help people she didn't know to stop smoking: "Smoking hurts you, but when you start smoking or chewing, you don't know that. The way it hurts you is that it has tar in it. The tar covers your lungs' air sacs so you can't breathe, but this only happens if you smoke a lot. So stop smoking, and get healthier. If you think it is cool, it is not."

The girls finished shooting their commercial on March 30, and it is set to air in May 2012 in rotation on the Armed Forces Network (AFN) for five years.

*"I don't understand why people smoke. Why would you pay to hurt yourself? It makes me feel good to help people and it is so much fun doing the commercial stuff."*

*– Anabeth*

## INFO

For more information on USA Girl Scouts Overseas-West Pacific (USAGSO-WP), visit westpacificgirlscouts.com.
For Girl Scouts Korea, go to girlscout.or.kr.

**Join Groove Korea & Community Korea for our**

# May party

***When:*** May 19, 7 p.m.-10:30 p.m.
***Where:*** Hill Side Bar, Itaewon
***Cost:*** Free
***Who:*** Everyone
***Information:*** www.facebook.com/communitykorea

Groove Korea is excited to announce a partnership with Community Korea to hold monthly social events that will help those in the expat community meet interesting people, make friends and enjoy some good food and drink. Expats and Koreans are likewise invited to attend.

On May 19, join fellow Groove Korea readers and Community Korea members at Hill Side Bar in Itaewon for the inaugural party. Heavily discounted food and drinks will be available.

Community Korea is dedicated to helping people with shared interests get together and form offline clubs in local communities across the country. It is also a social club that provides Koreans and expats a forum to make friends.

Groove Korea is the leading magazine for expats in the country.

"We hope these events help our readers get to know each other. They will also be a forum for people to simply make new friends – expat and Korean," said Sean Choi, Groove Korea's publisher. "Having lived overseas myself for a period of time, I know how hard it can be to meet new people, especially locals. We're going to help you with that."

Entry is free. Food and drink will be heavily discounted for the event. A pint of OB will cost only 2,000 won; Jack Coke, Rum Coke and Vodca Tonic will go for 3,500 won; Budweiser will cost 3,500 won; tequila shots will cost 2,500 won; cheese nachos will cost 5,000 won; and wings will cost 6,000 won.

Community Korea also helps expats adjust to living in Korea by providing useful information about English services in the country, including information on jobs, accommodation, popular tourist attractions and local hangouts.

They are best known for their parties, which they throw three times a month. They also provide language exchange classes twice a week and organize seasonal outings.

"The partnership with Groove Korea will allow more expats to get exposed to our group's information and helpful services," said Kwon Young-hun, a representative of Community Korea. "It will allow for a larger data base and more members equals more fun. More people will also have access to the specials we offer on our site and various coupons and prizes."

"Come and Enjoy life. Take a break and mingle," said Kwon. "It's about meeting new people and making friends from various nationalities."

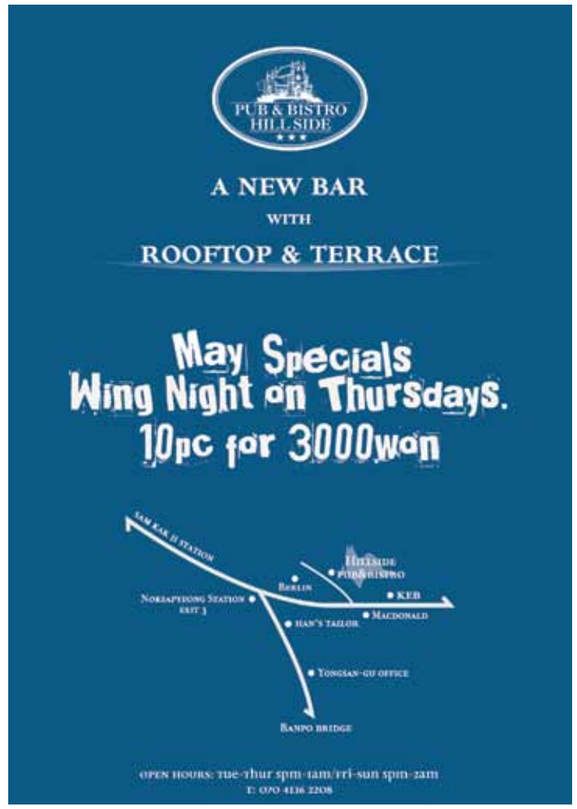
**Hill Side Bar**
**Phone: 070-4136-2208**
**Address: 57-28 Itaewon-dong Yongsan-gu**
**Directions: From Itaewon Station, take exit 1 and walk straight. Pass What The Book, veer to the right, walk up the hill towards Berlin and you'll see Hill Side Bar on the right.**

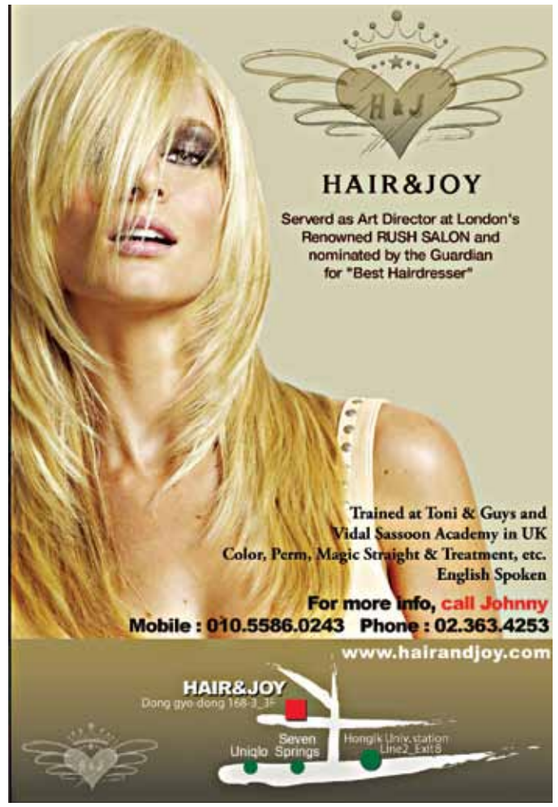








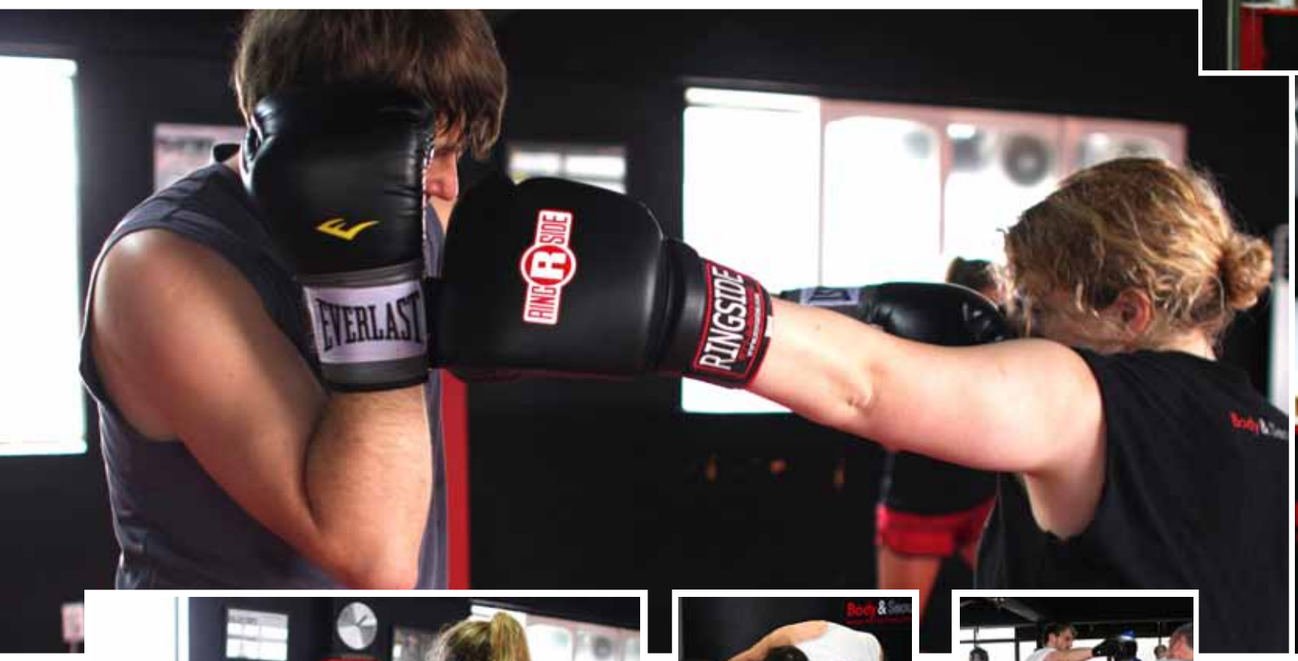



# JUMP-START

## YOUR METABOLISM FOR SUMMER

Body & Seoul Martial Arts Center

**Story & Photos by** Tyson DeWees









*"Get plenty of rest. Scientists are not sure why but those people who tended not to skimp on rest lost more weight and kept it off longer. One theory is that it has to do with your hormones."*

Spring is right around the corner and all those shut-in days and holiday parties are really starting to show, so what can you do? Jump start your metabolism is what you can do. Turn your body into a fat burning furnace and melt those pounds off before miniskirt and T-shirt weather kicks in.

Here are some simple tips to fire up that furnace:

• Get plenty of rest. Scientists are not sure why but those people who tended not to skimp on rest lost more weight and kept it off longer. One theory is that it has to do with your hormones.

• Eat clean. Cut down on processed food. One simple way to do this is to not eat anything that requires a label. If you don't know what it is by looking at it then maybe you don't need to eat it. Also, the fewer ingredients, the better.

• Choose the most metabolically-active exercise. This generally means interval training.

A study performed by Jeffery W. King of East Tennessee State University, published in May 2001, provided the proof.

The study showed that interval training increases resting metabolic rate for the following 24 hours. This means that not only do interval workouts increase metabolism and help burn fat during the workout, but they continue to do so for 24 hours after the workout.

• Drink plenty of water and cut down on sugary drinks and alcohol.

If you are not sure what interval training is, allow me to explain. Interval training just means you divide your workout up into segments or intervals.

A good plan is to choose a piece of cardio equipment (or you can run or bike), and then add intervals of resistance training such as squats, chest presses, etc. That is the simplest interval you could perform but it creates the opportunity for a lot of variation.











There are also classes that you can take that become natural interval training classes. Kickboxing is a great example. The classes are generally broken up into intervals using a round clock, which is the clock that counts the rounds in a competitive fight. Most classes will include a warm-up, fitness or conditioning, and then skills. In one hour you can get a great workout, burn a lot of calories (600-900 per hour!), and learn a new skill.

If that's not your thing, there are fitness classes that use a variety of interval type workouts. You may be asked to skip rope, lift medicine balls, and jump on a box. The classes are high intensity, with lots of variation, and great fun. In no time at all you can build muscle, lose fat, and become overall more fit. It's a great way to meet a whole new group of people and achieve your goals.

Still not convinced? According to The Exercise and Sports Science Review 2008, as little as six sessions of HIT (High-intensity Interval Training) over 2 weeks or a total of only approximately 15 minutes of very intense exercise (~600 kJ) per session, can increase skeletal muscle oxidative capacity and endurance performance and alter metabolic control during aerobic-based exercise. That means in just ninety minutes of exercise people actually got in better shape!

Whichever exercise you choose, consult a physician before starting and make sure to have a lot of fun.

**Tyson DeWees** is director of Personal Training at Body & Seoul Martial Arts and Fitness Center. The opinions expressed here do not represent those of Groove Korea. – Ed.

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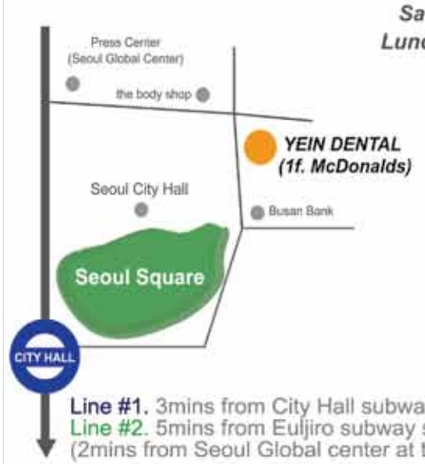
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# GANGNAM CLINICS
## ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Medical tourism booms in Korea's wealthiest district

**Story & Photos by** George Kim



*Korea is one of the top destinations in Asia, having pulled in $150 million in 2010.*

Nguyen Hai Hang, from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, didn't come to Korea to visit its ancient temples, nor is she here for the country's popular upscale shopping centers.

Nguyen paid a visit to Gangnam, Seoul last year to get a new nose. More specifically, to get hers redone.

"It's quite simple, really. When I looked into getting some work done in Japan and a few other places, I found that Korea offered the same quality care for much cheaper prices," said Nguyen, adding that plastic surgery is becoming more common in Vietnam, but the country lacks Korea's expert clinics and reasonable prices.

She's far from the only one seeking out Korea's medical services and is apart of what is called "medical tourism," which is defined as the international travel of patients primarily to obtain health care.

Korea is one of the top destinations in Asia, having pulled in $150 million in 2010 out of the $4 billion Asian market – good enough for fourth place. The top three are Thailand ($900 million), India ($330 million) and Singapore ($300 million). Those countries also saw 1.28 million patients, 630,000 and 180,000, respectively, while Korea took in 85,000 in the same year.

Gangnam in particular has seen an explosion in medical tourism dollars over the last few years.

In 2010, 19,000 foreign patients from overseas walked through the doors of a medical facility in Gangnam. By the end of 2011, that number is estimated to have surpassed 30,000, according to the Gangnam-gu Office. In dollar amounts, those foreign patients spent $60 million in 2009, $70 million in 2010 and an estimated $110 million last year.

In fact, it's such big business that the government has a special unit to promote medical tourism and assist clinics – especially smaller ones – in dealing with the influx of foreign customers.

The office supports clinics in three areas. When there is a medical expo overseas, it covers all the costs for a clinic to attend, including travel and hotel expenses. They also cover half the cost of translating websites into English, Chinese and Japanese.

Moreover, the Gangnam Medical Tourism Association has 65 medical coordinators that help patients communicate with the hospital staff.

About 200 clinics take advantage of these services.

The Gangnam-gu Office has been busy promoting medical tourism to foreigners in Korea and overseas. Gangnam – known for its wealth and private schools – is actually home to the highest concentration of hospitals and clinics in Korea. All told, there were approximately 2,300 of them in 2011.

The most popular medical services sought by foreigners are plastic surgery and general medical exams. The top four sources of patients are, in order, the United States, China, Japan and Russia.

"Medical services are very cost effective in Korea. I know that compared to the U.S., it is much cheaper here," said a representative of the Gangnam-gu Office.

"Secondly, through the Korean Wave, Korean plastic surgery is known the world over as being the best." He added that a nose job is about three times more expensive in the U.S. than it is in Korea.

Already popular amongst developed countries, the Medical Tourism Team is particularly focused on increasing the number of patients from Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Vietnam and Mongolia.

The Gangnam-gu Office spent 500 million won on medical tourism promotion in 2011.

"These countries are relatively close – a six-hour flight. Also, their medical technology is not as developed as ours, so it's more effective and safer for them to come here. We're targeting their high-income bracket in particular." Patients from different countries have particular demands. Ninety percent of Chinese visitors are geared toward plastic surgery, according to the representative; Japanese customers are more geared toward dermatology and oriental medicine; northern Asian countries prefer OB/GYN treatment; Americans mostly come to Korea for physical exams and chronic disease treatment.

"The Korean standard of beauty is spreading across Asia. It also makes more sense logistically to visit Korea rather than Europe. For Russian or Kazak people, it's just cheaper and faster to come to Korea," said the representative. "Since retuning to Ho Chi Mihn City, I've received so many compliments," said Nguyen. "I couldn't be happier."





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# CAPTURING KOREA

*Everyone loves beautiful pictures. Groove Korea is teaming up with the Seoul Photo Club to give readers tips on where to get the best snaps on the peninsula. Our photographers will share tips on how and where they shoot. To compete in the Photo Challenge and win great prizes from Groove Korea, head on over to the Seoul Photo Club on Flickr — flickr.com/seoulphotoclub.*

## Busan

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**50,000 WON**

*Compete in the Photo Challenge for a chance to win a 50,000 won voucher for a photo shop in Seoul. Go to the Seoul Photo Club's website for more information,* ***www.flickr.com/seoulphotoclub***



Photo by **Oh Ju-seok**

Photo by **Oh Ju-seok**

CAPTURING
*KOREA: Busan*

Photo by **Oh Ju-seok**



Photo by Oh Ju-seok





# CAPTURING KOREA

## BUSAN

**Story By** Peter DeMarco

The first time I met Oh Ju-seok, he had me sneaking past security guards and hanging over the edge of a 40-story building. But it was exactly where I wanted to be.

I saw his vertigo-inducing skyline images of Busan on the photo-sharing site Flickr and wondered how he got up so high. I e-mailed him and asked if I could join. Many rooftop photo sessions later, he has turned out to be an amazing teacher.

One of the most important lessons I've learned from him is – just as in business – location and timing is everything. Being in the right place at the right moment can turn an average photo into a magazine cover shot.

*"Busan is the best port city (in Korea) and many photographers like to take pictures of Busan because the city and the sea are in perfect harmony with each other."*

***Peter DeMarco: Tell us a little about yourself and your involvement in the Seoul Photo Club.***

*Oh Ju-seok:* I live in Busan and I am into photography and travel. Peter DeMarco, who was my first foreign friend, introduced me to the Seoul Photo Club. I enjoy showing foreigners the beautiful scenery of Busan through my photography. Also, I can learn about other cultures, nature and people from the many foreign photographers in the Seoul Photo Club.

***A large portion of your photographs are cityscapes of Busan. What makes Busan such a special place to photograph?***

Actually, Busan is my hometown. That makes Busan a special place for me. Besides that, Busan is the best port city (in Korea) and many photographers like to take pictures of Busan because the city and the sea are in perfect harmony with each other.

***Your cityscapes are often very vivid in color, and involve a lot of complex compositions. Any tips for those wanting to get similar shots?***

Since I express how I feel through my pictures, the colors of my pictures can differ from day to day. I usually take pictures from the mountaintop or the roof of a building because of the awesome viewpoints they provide.

***Tech geek question. What's your favorite piece of gear, and why?***

I have Canon 5D Mark II, Canon 24mm-70mm lens and Sigma 70mm-200mm lens. My favorite piece of gear is actually the Sigma 24-70mm, because it is very useful for night views; I can get beautiful results like starbursts. I recommend the Sigma lens to Canon users who like to take pictures of night views.

***We understand that you are also part of a club called Nightview. Can you tell us a little about that?***

Nightview is a club for those who like to take night view pictures. Some call this club "the playground of pictures," because many workers enjoy this club after work. Also, we call the time between 15 and 20 minutes after sunset "the magic hour" because we can take pictures as the evening glow and city lights are exposed together.

*"Nightview is a club for those who like to take night view pictures. Some call this club 'the playground of pictures,' because many workers enjoy this club after work."*

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# International clubs in Seoul

*To add your club to this list, e-mail mattlamers@groovekorea.com. — Ed.*

### Royal Asiatic Society
raskb@koreanet.net / www.raskb.com

This non-profit organization offers lectures about Korea's history and culture, while also arranging tours to locations throughout the country.

### The Australia and New Zealand Association
events@anzakorea.com / www.anzakorea.com

Catch up with them at the Grand Hyatt Paris Bar from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 20. Members are charged 12,000 won. Non-members pay 17,000 won.

### The British Association of Seoul
basseoul@yahoo.co.uk / www.britishseoul.com

BASS is a vibrant and active social group for British expatriates and all nationalities. We seek to enhance our members' experience in Seoul, and provide hope and financial assistance to Korean charities in need.

### Seoul International Women's Association
president@siwapage.com / www.siwapage.com

SIWA is open to women of all nationalities. Its monthly Coffee Mornings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Among its many other activities are twice-yearly classes for members by members referred to as Interest Groups.

### Busan International Women's Association
biwadove@yahoo.co.uk / www.biwakorea.com

This association extends friendship and support to international women living in the Busan-Kyungsang-Namdo area. The group meets at Starbucks opposite the Busan Aquarium on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Members and non-members are welcome.

### Seoul Writers Workshop
seoulwriters@gmail.com / seoulwriters.wordpress.com

SWW members meet every two weeks in order to read and critique each other's work. The aim is to provide opinions and constructive criticism. Work is distributed before workshops.

### Helping Others Prosper through English
bedavinci@naver.com / www.alwayshope.or.kr

HOPE's goals are to empower children through education and to open doors of opportunity for tomorrow's leaders. HOPE is one of the largest volunteer-based foreigner organizations in Korea and is comprised of both foreign and Korean staff.

### KOTESOL
www.kotesol.org

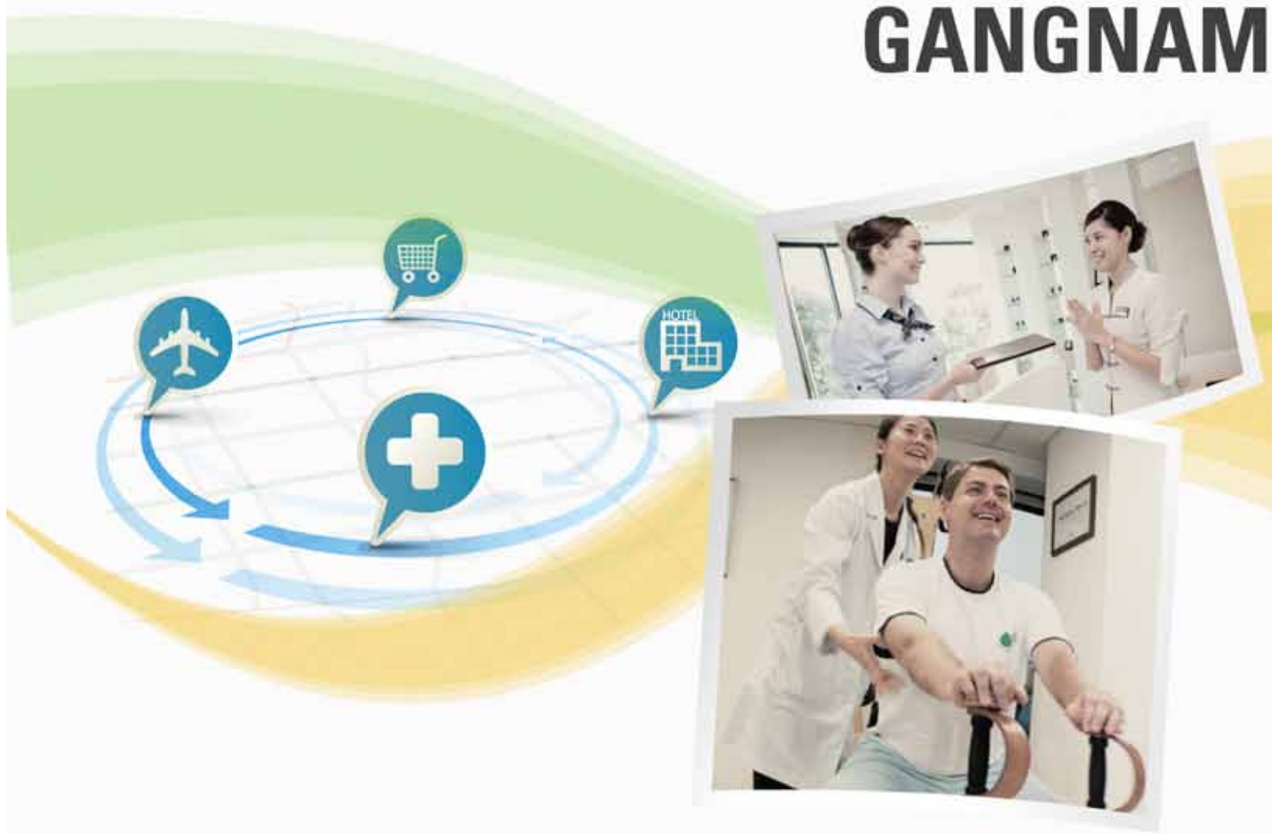
Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages is a professional organization for teachers of English. Our main goals are to assist members in their self-development, and improve ELT in Korea.

### Overseas Chinese Women's Club
http://ocwckr.wordpress.com

This club meets monthly and is open to anyone interested in learning about Chinese culture and making new friends. Conversation is in Mandarin.

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• Kim Jong-Suh Plastic Surgery Clinic
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• Daeyoung Plastic Surgery
• Dikay Plastic Surgery

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• Mirror Skin Clinic
• Modelo Skin Clinic
• I love beauty Skin Clinic

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• Noone Ophthalmic Hospital
• Merit Ophthalmic Clinic
• Seoul Bright Ophthalmic Clinic
• Seer eye Ophthalmic Clinic
• GS Ophthalmic Clinic
• Seoul Bright World Ophthalmology
• SL Ophthalmic Clinic

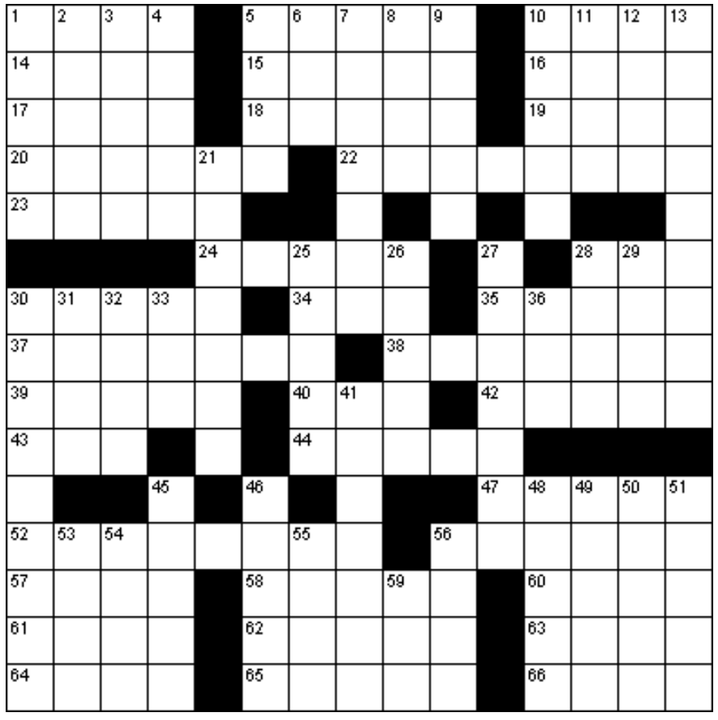
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## CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**

1. Strikes
5. Celestial body
10. Abbreviated abbreviation
14. Exclude
15. Alert
16. Function
17. Goo
18. Male name
19. Rake
20. Female name
22. Remote
23. Exchange
24. Fermented fruit juices
28. Document
30. Dice game
34. Slippery person
35. Tailless amphibians
37. Pleasing
38. No longer in existence
39. ----- acid, protein building-block
40. Hue
42. Primitive aquatic photosynthesizing organisms
43. Base of the decimal system
44. Hayseed
47. Walk (3,2)
52. Sideways
56. Secondary pipe
57. Vex
58. Horse harnessed alongside a vehicle's shaft
60. Hawaiian dance
61. Send forth
62. Female given name
63. Chinese gelatin
64. Debutantes
65. Elude
66. Borders

**DOWN**

1. Fowl shelter
2. Love affair
3. Open Italian pie
4. Place
5. City in NW France
6. Operating late at night
7. Afternoon performance
8. Near-Earth asteroid
9. Male voice
10. Marshal
11. Start
12. Low in spirits
13. Train again (2-7)
21. Paperboy
25. Destitute
26. Streamlined
27. Mortally
28. Manure
29. Grampus
30. Made a confusion of noises
31. Hoar
32. Consanguine
33. Greek god of forests
36. Naught
41. Sang by changing between falsetto and normal voice
45. Confronts
46. Effaced
48. Hebrew dry measure
49. Appraise
50. The Muslim world
51. Persons of great authority
53. 10-year prison sentence
54. Pat
55. Musical composition for one
56. Scottish slope
59. Engineer (abbrev)

## SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | | 2 | | | | 3 | |
| | | 1 | | 3 | 9 | | 7 | |
| | | 7 | | | | 2 | | |
| | | 5 | | 1 | | 4 | | 8 |
| | 6 | | 3 | | | | | 5 |
| | 1 | | | 5 | | | | 3 |
| | 2 | | 1 | | | | 4 | 7 |
| | | 6 | 4 | | | 5 | | |
| 8 | | 3 | | | 5 | | 1 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 | 6 | 7 | | | 4 | | |
| | | 5 | | | 8 | | | |
| 4 | | | | 9 | | 2 | | 7 |
| | | 2 | 6 | | | | | 8 |
| | | 4 | 2 | | 5 | | 9 | |
| 1 | 6 | | | | | | | 5 |
| | 1 | | | | 2 | 8 | 3 | |
| 6 | | | | 8 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | 3 | 7 | 1 | | |

**HOW TO PLAY**

Sudoku requires no calculation or arithmetic skills. It is essentially a game of placing numbers in squares, using very simple rules of logic and deduction.

**OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow. In a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:

- Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.








***Winner:*** Elisa B. Ketter

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*E-mail your entry along with your name and mailing address to submissions@groovekorea.com — Ed.*















### Aries

Difficult as it may be for you to face all those projects you've left undone, Aries, know that you'll be free to move on once they're complete. People from your past will resurface in unexpected ways. Perhaps they come forward to repay an old debt or possibly claim repayment from you. Don't abandon your dreams.

### Taurus

You could have a "eureka!" moment this month, Taurus, as events from your past unexpectedly bubble to the surface of your mind and crystallize in a surprising new way. Suddenly, you have a clear understanding of how these past events affect your present behavior. You can use this new knowledge to bring about change.

### Gemini

Sometimes it's easier to tend to life's mundane details rather than lift your eyes and see the big picture, Gemini. For example, it's likely that you've grown complacent at work. Could it be that you aren't at the right job or in the right career after all? Busying yourself with trivia isn't the way to avoid answering the question.

### Cancer

Change is in the air, Cancer. Whether it's a dramatic change of faith or a major shift in your life's goals, prepare yourself for a profound transformation. It's likely due to the fact that you now have more freedom to do what you want, when you want. Perhaps a financial windfall has made this possible. Embrace it.

### Leo

It's time to refill the well of your soul, Leo. You spend so much of your life in service to others that it's only natural that you feel drained sometimes. Rather than try to push past this feeling and go on as though nothing is the matter, consider it a sign that something is amiss. Admit if you're feeling unappreciated.

### Virgo

You would make an excellent judge, Virgo. You're able to consider all aspects of a situation. This is a bit of a blessing and a curse, because it can make it difficult to come to a decision. This month you could face the challenge of reconsidering past decisions. Once-binding contracts need to be reviewed and new ones created.

### Libra

Just because one person is no longer a part of your life doesn't mean that all people are unreliable. People change, as do situations. It's possible that this person was no longer a healthy influence on you, in which case the separation is for the best. You're going to have to become more adaptable.

### Scorpio

It can be hard to release old habits and beliefs even as new, better ways of thinking struggle to gain a foothold. It's time for you to do this, Scorpio. You might find it difficult to confide your feelings to another, but a frank conversation with close friends will do much to ease your mind. There's no question that you're changing.

### Sagittarius

You always suspected that your job was making you crazy, but it never occurred to you that it could make you sick, too. Is it really worth it, Sagittarius? You may be asking yourself this question often this month. Fortunately, your talents apply to several professions. Why not take a closer look at other fields?

### Capricorn

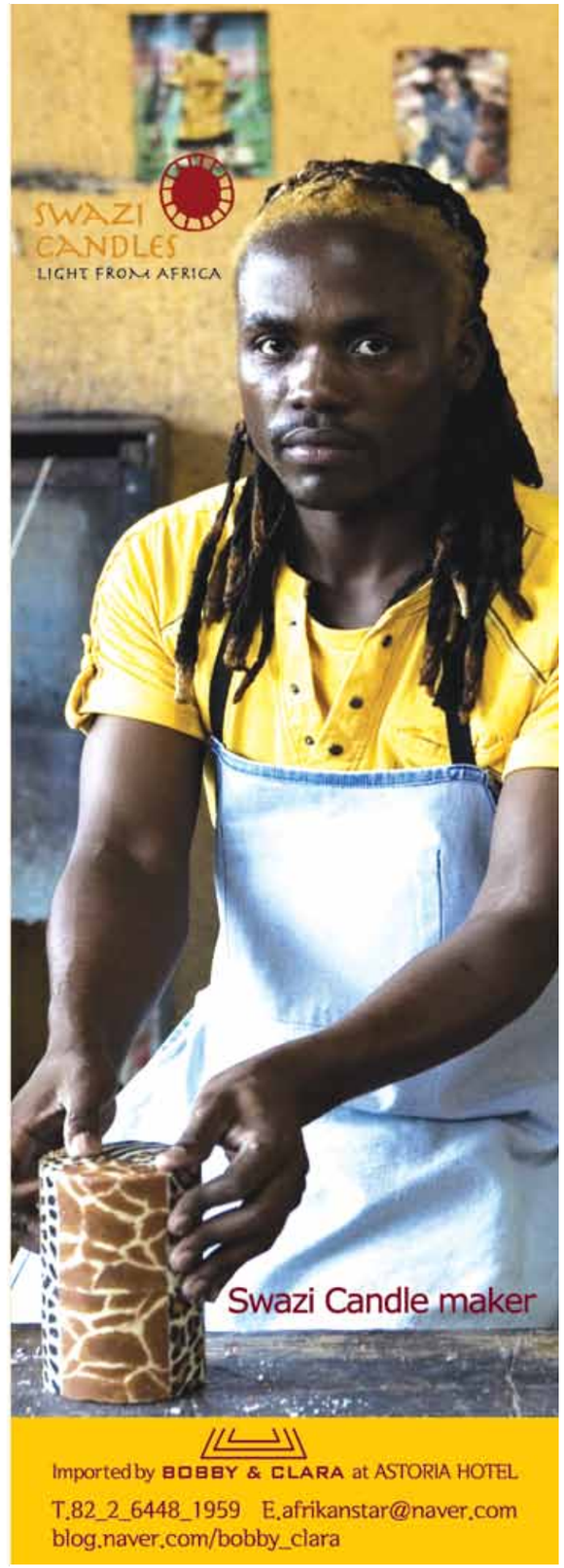
Just how long has it been since you indulged in a big helping of your favorite guilty pleasure, Capricorn? It's time to let the youngster in you come out and play this month. Eat that chocolate, read those mindless magazines, or skip down the sidewalk. You've been taking life much too seriously lately.

### Aquarius

If you feel like you're trying to push a square peg into a round hole, you're probably right, Aquarius. Whether you're having personal or professional difficulties, there are times when it just doesn't pay to try so hard. In fact, it's often a sign that there is something fundamentally wrong with the relationship.

### Pisces

Things aren't always as they first appear. People you thought you knew well and circumstances that you thought you understood thoroughly now seem anything but straightforward. Has the world really changed that much or has your perception altered somehow? It's time to try directing this "altered" vision inward.

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